

The Dragon Whisperer's Daughter

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Summary: Camicazi could never seem to figure out why her father hated her so... Then she was given the task of dispatching a cruel chief, Hiccup of Berk. But when the time comes to face Hiccup, nothing is as she believed it would be... They don't fight dragons... They ride them...

1. Chapter 1

There was another blast of fire. Hiccup turned sharply on the spot. The fire hit far too close to his home. Ignoring the masses of Berserkers ahead of him, he turned and ran back towards his home, listening for the sound he was afraid he wouldn't hear.

A cry. First came the desperate shriek of a baby and then came the terrified scream of "DADDY!"

"Daddy?" Came Dagur's voice from somewhere behind him. Hiccup ignored it and kept running towards the house which was quickly going up in flames. Another yell came from somewhere to his right and he saw Astrid running as fast as her legs would carry her towards a small figure tumbling down the hillside. "Mummy!" The figure cried as they ran into Astrid's open arms.

"Finn! Oh my baby! Are you hurt? Where's...?"

"TOOTHLESS! GET IN THERE NOW! Astrid, keep Finn safe!" Hiccup yelled as he kept running towards the house where a baby was still crying out desperately. Hiccup saw Toothless go into the house through the blaze and the crying ceased. Panicking Hiccup ran faster. As he reached the house, Toothless came out, his eyes wide with fear and shrieking a terrible cry Hiccup had never heard before. It was a cry that shook Hiccup to his very core, it brought tears to his eyes and he knew innately that this cry was one of distress. And he feared in that moment more than he had perhaps ever in his life. He burst into the blazing house and began searching desperately for the baby who

should have been there crying.

Worse than the absence of the crying, worse than finding the baby lying there dead... was finding the baby gone. Hiccup tore the house apart, searching everywhere for the baby, the tiny little baby who had been less than a month old.

"No. NO! Where is she? Where is she?!" Hiccup cried, choking on the thickening smoke. He would not give up... not ever. He had to find her, he had to. He'd search until the flames consumed him if he had to.

"Daddy! Daddy where are you?!" Came a small desperate plea from outside the inferno that had been his home. Hiccup hesitated.

"Hiccup? Hiccup please! Don't you dare leave us! We need you, the tribe needs you!" He heard Fishlegs yelling somewhere nearby.

"FINN NO!" He heard Astrid cry.

"But Daddy's in there! Daddy didn't call back to me! He always does! Daddy always comes to me when I cry!" Hiccup coughed, he couldn't leave, but he had a family out there and a tribe who were alive and needed him. His heart breaking he turned and ran out of the blazing building falling in a heap at Astrid's feet.

"Daddy!" Finn cried out throwing his arms around Hiccup's neck and sobbing.

"Shhh, it's ok Finn. I'm here, it's all going to be ok." He clutched his son tightly and picked him up, holding the small child in his arms as he stood up to face Astrid. Her face was covered with soot and her arms were sprayed with blood, her eyes filled with tears.

"The baby?" She whispered. Hiccup held onto Finn tighter, keeping his head buried into his own neck and shook his head very slightly, tears falling down his own cheeks as he looked at her. Astrid began to cry and Hiccup held one arm out and pulled her in close, clutching at what was left of his family as if he would never let them go. He thought about his baby girl... Where could she have gone? The thought was too painful so Hiccup just clung onto Finn and Astrid and made a promise to himself that nothing and no one would ever be able to tear his family apart again.

Somewhere in the distance a young woman hushed a crying baby who had tumbled into the sea after sliding out of the grip of a small dragon. Her own son looked uncertainly at the baby.

"Where did it come from?" He asked, she knew his father would ask the same thing as soon as he laid eyes on the babe. She knew full well where the baby had come from, but her dislike of her husband made her all the more determined that she would protect and love this child as much as her own son. She looked down at the baby who was now staring at her with huge green eyes and knew in a heartbeat, this baby was special. This baby was a sign from the God's. A baby brought to her by a dragon. It was a sign, and she would take it as such.

"She came from the God's." She told her son as Dagur stumbled aboard

the boat and stared at the bundle in her arms and his son watching it carefully...

2. Chapter 2

Ten years later

"AHHHH!" The girl yelled ferociously as she thrust her axe down with all her strength at the boy in front of her. He dodged and her axe wedged in the ground. Abandoning the axe she dodged his attempted to hit her with his shield and took his legs out from behind. She leapt back to her feet and pinned him to the floor grabbing the sword that had fallen to the floor and pressing it against his back.

"SURRENDER!" She yelled. The boy groaned and tried to shove her off but failed.

"Fine." He spat and she stood up turning around smiling proudly up at her father. He smiled weakly but then gave up and walked away.

"Urgh!" She groaned. "What do I have to do to get his approval?!" She snapped at the boy behind her.

"Stop making me look weak. I'm supposed to be his heir and yet you keep beating me and that's not great in his eyes!" She turned and glared at her brother. He had reddish black hair the same as their father and the same cold grey eyes. They were not yet as crazed as their father's but she knew that the older he got, the more crazed they would become.

"I don't want much, I just want him to be a little proud of me. To give me some sign that he cares a little about me and doesn't just keep me around for mum!"

"You know he does." Her brother responded brushing the dust off his armour as he stood upright again. "He only didn't kill you as an infant because she pleaded with him not to. So when she was killed he kept you safe, and raised you in her memory. He doesn't really care particularly..." He straightened his helmet up as she threw a punch at his face.

"He didn't raise me! She raised me! She loved me and cared for me, and protected me as best she could from him... Then they killed her and I was left with only you and father!"

"He'd have been more brutal if not for Savage holding her last wish close to his heart and protecting you." She raised her eyes to the walkway around the arena where Savage stood watching her after her fight with her brother. It was true, Savage had tried to protect her more from her father and his soldiers, because her mother's last wish had been that he keep her safe. She knew the truth of course, she'd learnt it when she was about five. Her mother had found her after a small dragon carrying her away from an island under siege had dropped her and she'd fallen into the sea. Her mother then sought to raise her as her own, alongside her son. Despite her father's uncertainty about it, he had allowed it as he felt some affection for her mother. Her mother had told her she never really loved him. She stayed for

the love of her son.

"Would you stop punching me every time I remind you of the truth!" Vott snapped at her rubbing the side of his face where she had hit him. Scowling she turned to leave when she saw her father walk in, Savage and Levi behind him. Levi was his right hand man and often trained Vott and the other young Viking boys. She was not usually permitted to be trained with them. Savage though saw her potential and trained her himself and sometimes bought her to the training.

There were some things though, some things no one taught her. That she taught herself and kept secret for when she revealed such abilities initially, she had been punished with the whip.

"CAMICAZI!" Her father bellowed, "VOTT! I wish to speak with you both." Vott scowled at his sister. "You've got us into more trouble now." He hissed.

"Silence!" She stared into her father's hard eyes, she was not afraid of him. "Vott! You clearly are not training hard enough if she can continue to beat you so easily in a fight, and take your weapon from you!" Vott looked at his feet slightly ashamed.

"I am sorry father. I shall train harder."

"Good. Camicazi... You continue to show up your brother. You still disobey me and still have that infernal obsession with dragons! I have told you time and time again about fraternising with the dragons! They are wild animals that will kill you as soon as they look at you!" Some people might have mistaken this for concern and affection. Camicazi knew better. Her father simply hated anyone having any association with a dragon that did not involving killing it and cutting off it's head as a trophy.

"Dagur..." Savage began.

"Silence Savage! Leave us... both of you!" He bellowed back. Savage reluctantly left the arena behind Levi.

"For the last time father! Dragons will not kill you as soon as you look at them, they could even be trained I am sure of it..." She began. He stared at her for a moment then his eyes widened and he went, berserk.

"DO NOT SPEAK OF TRAINING DRAGONS YOU FOOLISH GIRL!"

"WHY NOT?!" She screamed back. Dagur stared at her for a moment, as if truly considering her for the first time.

"Because... Because there is an island where they train dragons."

"What?!"

"But the dragons are unhappy, they are never truly free. The chief even has one of the most majestic of the dragons as his own. A Night Fury. But he destroyed half of its tail so it cannot fly without him. I may not like dragons, but I would not see them held in such a way.

The dragons are held in cages, and forced to do the bidding of their owner at the hands of a whip, axe or bludgeon. They do not trust those who hold them and so are miserable." Camicazi looked appalled as he told her about these ghastly people. "The only dragon I would allow to be trained here is a Skrill, the dragon of our people, I would ensure it trusted one of our own so we could harness it's powers enough to free those poor dragons who are enslaved."

"But what of the disabled Night Fury? It cannot fly without the Chief. What would we do for it?"

"I fear our only choice would be to put it out of it's misery. My daughter," He said, raising her chin gently to look at him. He never called her daughter, her heart lifted, maybe here was a sign that he truly did care, "My daughter. There is another reason I would use a Skrill, an army against these vile people. They are responsible for your mother's death. If not for that Chief, she would still be here. When you speak of training dragons, of them not being lethal... I remember those people, that Chief and his dragons and feel burning hatred. They have fought us for years, and they took your mother from us three years ago. My child, I was wrong. I was wrong to criticise your gift with such creatures, perhaps, if we can find a Skrill you can train it and at last we can punish them for what they have done. This could be your moment to shine, for glory. My child, will you take on this challenge?"

She felt the tears burn in her eyes as she thought of those poor dragons, of her secret, of her mother. She looked up into her father's face, her green eyes blazing like fire and nodded.

"I shall father. I am ready."

3. Chapter 3

Three years on

"Woah!" Finn gasped as Buffnut bought down a sword close to his left ear. "Watch it Buffnut!" He snapped at the girl.

"Not my fault you're lousy at this!" She grinned as Gobber yelled at her.

"That's enough Buffnut! Let Finn up" He called. Laughing she stepped aside and let Finn stand up. He rubbed his side where he had fallen. He ran his fingers through his red brown hair and sighed, turning his blue eyes onto Gobber and the other Viking youths. His best friend, Gudrun Ingerman, son of Fishlegs, smiled encouragingly at him whilst Rufflout and Miktak sniggered behind their hands. Rufflout was Snotlout's son, Miktak and Buffnut were Ruffnut's children.

"This is hopeless Gobber. I'm never going to be a great warrior like Mum and Dad."

"Don't think like that lad, there was a time when your father could hardly lift a sword. It'll come to you in time. You're only fifteen. Your father was barely getting to grips with who he was at this age!" This perked him up a bit. A small dragon let out a cry and bounded forwards to greet him.

"Hey Guillotine. You alright girl?" He stroked the young Timberjack and scratched her back which she loved. She let out a happy chirp as Finn's parents flew in.

"Hey Mum, Hey Dad!" He said hurrying over to pet Toothless and Stormfly as his parents' dismounted.

"How's it going son?" Hiccup asked smiling broadly at Finn with his bright green eyes.

"Not great, I'm useless at this fighting lark. I'm alright with the dragons though."

"Don't worry," Astrid said smiling at both Finn and Hiccup with the same blue eyes as Finn "your Dad was exactly the same."

Finn smiled, his parents were the greatest, always encouraging him, never putting him down and helping him anyway they could. He knew that when he became Chief one day, if he was any good at all, it would be thanks to his parents training above all else.

He was lucky to have parents like these.

"You're ready now." Dagur breathed as he looked upon Camicazi and Vott. Vott was now fifteen and well on his way to becoming as fierce as his father. Camicazi though only thirteen, was incredibly beautiful, with blonde hair that glistened in the sunlight and startling green eyes that pierced through you, but she was as fierce as her brother. Beside Camicazi stood a creature of equal beauty and power. It let out a cry and sparked until she reached out a hand to soothe it.

"I still don't like this idea of harnessing him to the ship." She hissed. "I told you, I can ride him and aim far better that way. He hates the harness. It makes him angry and he cries out. If you continue to force it on him he'll strike you down."

"Enough Camicazi. Get him back into the ships hold. Keep him inside. I do not want our presence detected before it must be."

"They're more likely to trust me if I'm seen to ride a dragon. It could be our way in."

"Child, the Skrill is a dragon they fear and hate. Hiccup will kill it on sight for Night Furies and Skrills have a long standing feud. I thought you would not want to risk your beloved dragon?"

She turned and looked and the brilliant purple dragon standing beside her. The dragon raised his narrow head to look at her with his yellow red eyes. The eyes were gentle when they looked upon her but she saw undeniable fear in them too. She stroked his head, running her hand along the crest of spikes that surrounded his face and down the length of his back. He was still only young and so he was not particularly large but he was powerful.

"I will not risk his life for anything." She whispered stroking him lovingly. "But you know I hate seeing him in that harness. You hit him even though you say you hate that Hiccup and his men hit their dragons. You hit him and it's wrong."

Dagur glared at her. His little story about Hiccup's dragons had its flaws, but it had been the only way to get her to help. She had fought him greatly the last three years over the care of the dragon. She had been hit more than the dragon had. Sometimes as punishment for her actions, sometimes because she'd stand between the dragon and the whip. She was strong, she was fierce and bold. She had as much fire within her as her beloved dragon. Her gift with it though, it meant at last the Berserkers had a Skrill that was theirs to command.

"Just remember what you are here for Camicazi. Are you both ready to take on this mission?" He asked of them both. Both Vott and Camicazi nodded.

"Then you leave in the small boat at first light for Berk. Do not fail me."

"We will not let you down father." Vott insisted placing a fist over his heart.

"Hiccup will rue the day he messed with the Berserkers and with dragons." Camicazi spat as she clutched her dragon. Hiccup would not harm her dragon. Nor any other again after she was through with him.

4. Chapter 4

Darkness fell and the dragon squirmed uncomfortably in his harness. He did not screech, nor did he try to get away for his human was here and he knew she would not let any harm come to him. He had known for many years she was special, his protector. He remembered so well when they first met.

She had been out on the far side of the island, the area full of sharp drops and cliffs, an area usually too dangerous for humans to go, especially as it was the only place in Hysteria that dragons still came to. He had not known why she had been out there, a small helpless looking child barely older than seven. The first thing he recalled about their meeting was what had brought him down. He himself had only been very small back then and his flying had been weak, erratic and he could not ride the storm or lightning very well. A great storm had hit and the God's, he had first thought, had sought to smite him. He now knew they had been sending him to his destiny, they had blessed him. He'd tumbled through the air and crashed down on one of the rocky cliffs. The lightning had still sought him but he could not channel it properly and so it built up inside him and burst forth uncontrollably. He had felt so weak and helpless. He dragged himself into a cave cut into this treacherous cliff side and had collapsed in there, believing he would never wake up.

But he had. When he had awoken his eyes had looked upon a pair of bright green eyes that were full of fear and sadness. The girl had obviously sought shelter from the storm as he had. She had not expected to find him here. They had stared at each other for a few moments before he began to growl at her, hoping it would be enough to scare her away. He knew humans to be dangerous and vile creatures. Especially those who lived on Hysteria. He had not got enough strength to fight her for long should she attack. But she was a very a tiny human he noticed. Her hair was dripping and there was as much

fear in her eyes as there was in his. Perhaps even more in hers. He'd fired a warning shot, or intended to. The resulting blast of white fire had been more powerful than he had intended but she dodged it and crouched low, her hands outstretched as if trying to keep him at a distance, but yet they were not threatening; only frightened. He had growled again but then she had done something truly bizarre. She had begun to sing. To this day, no matter how restless he grew her voice could soothe him, even if all she did was speak to him.

On that stormy night though she had sung softly to him, some sort of lullaby, it must have been a human song he had thought at first, but then she had kept singing, and there was something hauntingly familiar about it. Though she sang with a human voice, using human words, the song that she sang was dragonsong. He had calmed instantly as she sang soothingly to him, her small voice somehow drowned out the thunder and rain despite being rather quiet. She had slowly crept forwards towards him, keeping her hands out as she sang, but never getting quite close enough to touch him. She had dipped her head slightly as she sang the final part of the song, closing her eyes and keeping her hands out. In that moment he knew he could trust her. For that song was known only to a few rare humans, to those that had become known as Dragon-Whisperers. And a Dragon-Whisperer was not a threat to him. He had crept forwards himself and placed his head against the palm of her hand, letting out a contented rumble from the back of his throat as his skin made contact with hers. She had opened her eyes and looked at him surprised but the instant their eyes had locked, she had smiled and relaxed, stroking him from tip of his snout to the end of his tail.

"It's ok little one." She had whispered, even though he was still far larger than she, "You're safe now. I'll look after you. I promise." And he knew she meant it.

He let out a contented rumble now. She was his human and she had always protected him. After their first encounter she would sneak back to see him often and began to train him, first with hand signals and calls, he would fly and she would stand on the ground and watch. Then finally she had climbed upon his back and they had soared through the air together. She worked tirelessly to care for him and to fashion a saddle that would allow her to ride him without suffering from his lightning. She'd created a whole suit, and weapons for battle that would not cause her to suffer. The sword was her greatest achievement. Of course, she had been hit by his lightning before. She had a lightning scar on her arm from it, but that had been long ago and he had struggled so much after it had happened. Fearful he may harm her again he tried to leave her. She would not permit it. She loved him and so fought against him so that they might stay together. Honestly, he had not minded at all. When she brought him first to her village he had been fearful and rightly so, for her father, or the man she called father was a cruel man and an evil chief. He created this vile harness for him but she always protected him from her father's wrath. More than once she had thrown herself between him and the whip and suffered greatly for it. She had never let him down and so he stayed here now, no matter how uneasy it made him. He would not abandon her. Even though he could sense the Night Fury, his ancestors' enemy. Even though he sensed it was close, he would not leave her side.

"Sparky?" Came a soft whisper from the darkened corner of the room.
"Sparky are you ok?"

He grumbled a response to tell her he was. "Oh good." She breathed and he felt her hands on his back. "I'm getting you out of here Sparky. I'm to go ashore tomorrow, but I'll not leave you here alone with them. Father will hate it, and I'll be punished later, but I don't care." She spat as she drew a short knife from her belt and cut through the harness bonds that held him. She then placed his saddle back on him and he rumbled happily, he quite liked having his saddle on, despite it making him appear tame and weak to allow a human upon his back, for him it was a mark of his bond with her. Once the saddle was firmly in place she clambered onto his back.

"Keep the lightning to a minimum ok boy? As soon as we're off the boat I want you to head for the clouds, we'll need to disappear." He grumbled again to show he understood and they slipped silently out of the door and onto the deck. "Ready boy? Evasive cloud manoeuvres!" She whispered and he shot into the sky with the blazing speed that characterised all the dragons in Strike class. He headed straight for the clouds and they flew on towards the island of Berk. He sensed the Night Fury, it was getting ever closer and a part of him longed to turn back, but he did not. For she was determined to go to this island and succeed in her mission. He was not sure about it, but until he was certain, he would not confront her nor stop her.

"It's ok boy. I know you sense it, the Night Fury. But it is saddened and held against its will. We shall end its misery in time. I will not let it harm you."

They flew closer and closer to the island and as they came to be almost overhead, they left the safety of the clouds and headed for the forest below. Everything was going fine, that is until they heard it. The call of the Night Fury. Sparky panicked, a small ripple of lightning ran down the length of his body and fired into the night sky, giving away their position. The Night Fury came into view. Camicazi laid herself low on Sparky's body, hiding herself from view.

"Sparky we have to find somewhere to hide." She breathed keeping a hand on the side of his head to keep him calm. He tried to fly down but the Night Fury screeched at him and the fight began. It blasted at him three times, all of which he dodged, but he feared for Camicazi's safety. She was in more danger, she had more to lose. He took a risk in order to save and assist her. He dived towards the Night Fury, facing his fear if only for a second, blasting it with lightning, it flew high above him to escape the lightning and he dived for the safety of the trees. As he flew towards the forest floor, certain they were safe, a blast hit him. He went spiralling out of control but managed to throw Camicazi off his back before crashing down into a small cove in the forest...

5. Chapter 5

Hiccup and Toothless landed in the forest and began to search for some sign of the Skrill. It had behaved rather oddly but Hiccup wanted it gone from Berk. Skrills were far too dangerous, not only to the people, but to Toothless. And should Dagur discover there was a Skrill on Berk... He'd come for it. Hiccup and the tribe had suffered enough at Dagur's hand. Never again Hiccup swore. Toothless let out a deep growl, he sensed something. Hiccup drew his sword and stepped

forward carefully as something small tumbled out of the bushes.

A small girl stood before him. She stared at him with wide, scared eyes. In the darkness he could not make out their colour but somehow he felt they were familiar.

"What are you doing here? Where have you come from? Who are you?" He asked her. She looked from him to Toothless and back again. "He won't hurt you I promise." He said. "Now who are you?"

The girl seemed a little uncertain. Toothless was watching her intently, as if trying to decide if he trusted her or not. His eyes were narrowed and he stared at her.

"Toothless, easy bud. You'll scare her if you keep looking at her like that." Hiccup said placing a gentle hand on his head. Toothless blinked and his expression softened and he let out a low contented rumble.

Camicazi listened. The Night Fury was making the same happy sound as Sparky did. It seemed happy, but it couldn't be. She'd been told it was miserable. Maybe it just didn't know any better. She stared at the man before her. He didn't look like the monster she'd been told about. He was smaller built than most Vikings, he had a missing leg and as he leaned against the dragon he changed the lower attachment to one which allowed him to walk more easily. His hair fell over his head as he pulled off his helmet and she saw his eyes. They did not look cold and ruthless; in fact, her father's eyes were colder than his. It was in contrast with everything she knew about him. But she knew looks could be deceiving, she was proof of that.

"How about giving us a bit of light bud?" he said to the dragon who sent a blast at a small rock on the ground, making it glow. A gasp escaped her lips before she could stop it. He had green eyes.

There were not many people with green eyes as far as she knew, she'd only ever seen one person on Hysteria besides herself with green eyes, but the man had been a slave and she'd seen him only once. Yet here stood Hiccup, with green eyes. They were warm and friendly and he smiled at her. No one smiled at her.

"It's ok; I didn't mean to frighten you. Where have you come from?" he asked her kindly.

"Far away." She said. If he knew where she'd come from she'd never be able to do what was necessary.

"Hey you can speak! Ok, where far away? How did you end up here?" He was still smiling at her, it unnerved her. It was a genuine and warm smile, something she had not seen since... since her mother.

"Where is here?" She asked despite knowing full well. She decided that the little washed up act might work.

"This is Berk. My name is Hiccup, I'm chief of the tribe here."

"Berk? I am a long way from home."

"Well how did you get to be so far from home? We'll get you back,

don't worry."

"No!" She yelled, planning everything in her head, she needed his trust, his sympathy. She needed a way in. "Please don't make me go back there! Please I'm begging you!"

"Why don't you want to go back?"

"I... I ran away." She said thinking on her feet. "Girls and women are not treated well on my island. I get hit a lot and the older I get, the worse it will become. I ran away so they cannot hurt me anymore. I stole a small boat to escape, but got lost in a storm, the next thing I remember was washing up on the beach here."

"It's ok, you're safe here. We'll look after you. No one is going to hurt you now. Come on, I'll take you to the village, we'll get you fed and watered and let you rest. I'm sure you're very tired and drained." She eyed him uncertainly. She needed to find Sparky, but here was her way in.

"How do I know I can trust you? How do I know you aren't going to hurt me, to go back on your word?"

"Ok, here." He passed her his sword and his shield. "You're armed and I'm not. Just let me take you to the village, my wife will help look after you I'm sure." She felt surprised by him; he handed over his weapons and defences without hesitation and yet still smiled. Nodding slightly uncertainly she stepped forward to follow him as he mounted the dragon.

"Alright bud, take it easy ok? She's been through a lot." He switched leg attachments again and clicked it into place on the stirrup on the dragon's saddle. It was connected to the dragon's tail and she saw where the tail was artificial. She stared at it horrified.

"I'm sorry to say it's my fault he's missing that part of his tail. But over the years I've managed to make it so he can fly solo. Sometimes though, he still likes me to be in control. But in the end it all evens out, he has only half a tail, and I have half a leg. Oddly enough though, it just makes us stronger." She stared for a minute longer; she was starting to question some of what she had been told by her father. But she would not fail in her mission. She climbed onto the Night Fury's back without a problem, letting her disguise drop as she did so, she was comfortable on dragon back and the dragon was so magnificent that she couldn't help but place a hand on his head and scratch him. His build was similar to that of Sparky and he felt oddly familiar and she sat there.

"You don't seem scared of him at all now. That was a quick change. Usually people question it all far more and are a bit anxious the first time they fly." He said, watching her closely.

"I guess I just realised if you could ride him he couldn't be as frightening as he looked."

Hiccup smiled at her and patted the dragon gently.

"Alright Toothless, take us home, gently please bud." And they soared gracefully into the air. She hated leaving Sparky but she was on her way now. She stared around and admired the view; she took note of

where they had left and where they were going so she could find her way back. It was amazing.

"You ok back there?" Hiccup asked her, turning his head to look at her. She had her arms stretched out into the clouds and was smiling, she had not held onto him for takeoff or anything. She was clearly very comfortable on dragon back, this posed Hiccup with a number of questions but he did not ask them.

"I'm fine." She breathed as she inhaled deeply. She loved to fly, it was so free up her and she loved it more than anything. It was the only time she ever felt truly happy, truly one with herself. They flew swiftly through the air for a short while before landing outside of a large house that looked out over a village.

"This is my home, my village. You'll be safe here, don't worry." He said as he slid off the dragon's back and held out a hand to help her down. She didn't need it and dismounted carefully but quickly with the casual grace that suggested she knew what she was doing. It intrigued Hiccup but at the same time, for some reason it unsettled him.

"Hiccup?" A voice came from the open door of the house and a woman stepped out of it. Camicazi couldn't help but notice she was very beautiful. "I thought you were on night patrol?" The woman said storming down towards him with an attitude that screamed not to mess with her.

"I was, and am but I had to..." He began, it surprised Camicazi that he seemed a little flustered and lost for words under the gaze of this woman.

"Who is this?" she demanded of him.

"Errr, she washed ashore. Toothless and I found her in the forest. I brought her here so we could look after her..."

"So another Heather then?" The woman spat

"No Astrid, not another Heather. Look, she's just here whilst I figure out what to do ok?" The woman, Astrid, eyed her suspiciously. She had bright blue eyes and hair as golden as the sun.

"Mum, Dad?" A boy who looked no older than Vott came down from the house now and looked at the three people before him. Camicazi stared at him. She had not known about him. She didn't know that Hiccup had a son. How had her father neglected to tell her that?

"Who's this?" The boy asked rubbing his eyes and yawning.

"I was just saying to your Mum..."

>"My name is Camicazi." She said looking away from the boy and to Hiccup.<p>

"There we go; she has a name after all." Hiccup gave Astrid a crooked smile but she continued to glare.

"Hiccup, we have to talk about this. We know nothing about this girl! She could be working with Dagur for all we know!" Camicazi felt like someone had stabbed her with a blade made from ice.

"Look, I'm not going to cast out a child who washed ashore! We have to help her even if she doesn't stay long..."

>"Did you see her wash ashore? Have you seen any boat wreckage or are you just taking her word for it?"<p>

"Mum, Dad. Can we just calm down...?" They all argued and Camicazi turned away. What now? She wondered. Astrid clearly trusted no one. They considered her father an enemy, she knew this to be true, the tribes were enemies. But they already suspected her so how could she carry out her plan.

"Do you not remember what we lost the last time Dagur and his men set foot on Berk?" Astrid cried, tears burning in her eyes. Camicazi turned around, her curiosity suddenly peaked.

"Of course I do. How could I ever forget Astrid?" Hiccup half snapped. His voice though was softening as she cried. "Come here, it's ok. He's not going to hurt us again. He'll never tear our family apart ok. I promise." He held her close and then reached out for his son who stepped into his mother and fathers embrace. Toothless let out a deep rumble. Another dragon joined him. Camicazi listened. It was a call of sorrow and loss. She wondered what had happened. As she stared at the little family she felt a great wave of sadness herself. Was this family? Was this what love really was? She'd never had that. Not even when her mother had been alive. Not like this. She stepped back a few paces, afraid to intrude on this intimate moment when she bumped into the other dragon she had heard calling. A stunning blue Deadly Nadder. Both the Nadder and Toothless watched her as she backed away a little more. Carefully she held out her hand to the Nadder who slowly stepped forward and allowed her to stroke it. With one hand on the Nadder and the other on Toothless she began to sing, very softly, so softly that it could simply have been the whisper of a gentle breeze. It was the song she sang to Sparky, a song she knew from somewhere within her, as if from some far off memory, a distant dream. She sang and the dragons both settled down and the others throughout the village stirred and began migrating towards the sound. They knew the song, and they sought out its singer.

Valka stirred in her bed, she could hear dragonsong. She had not heard it for a very long time, but the voice that sang it she did not know. She hurried down the stairs and out of the door in time to see her dragon rush with all the others to the songs source. She listened for a moment longer before gasping and staring to the skies.

"A Dragon-Whisperer. She has returned."

6. Chapter 6

Hiccup looked up and saw to his great surprise all the village dragons gathering around Camicazi. Toothless, Stormfly, Meatlug, Hookfang, Barf and Belch... Thornado, Cloudjumper... All of them were surrounding her. But they were not doing it in a threatening manner; they were lying around her and resting.

"What are they doing?" Astrid asked him as she spotted Stormfly and as Finn's dragon flew down to join the rest.

"I don't know." Hiccup confessed, he listened, he could hear a song.

One that was haunting to him, it haunted his sleep, his dreams and his nightmares. "Dragonsong" he whispered as Valka came down to join them.

"Yes, but who is singing it? Very few know dragonsong." Valka said. "I've not heard dragonsong since..." Hiccup turned and glared at his mother. He did not need reminding of the last time dragonsong had been heard on Berk.

"How does she know it?" He asked under his breath as they stared down and Camicazi surrounded by dragons as she sang. A Terrible Terror flew around before darting squealing happily into her arms and still she sang.

The little dragon squealed happily as it laid eyes on her and darted into her arms, sniffing her, looking into her eyes and then rubbing itself affectionately against her. She stroked it gently, leaning against Toothless as the Nadder nuzzled her. She gazed around at the other dragons that had joined them. Tomorrow at first light she was going to find Sparky. She hated knowing that he was out there somewhere, probably frightened, maybe hurt. She had to find him. She settled against Toothless, the little Terrible Terror curled up in her arms. These dragons were not so miserable. They were not hurt; they bore no signs of ill-treatment. Was anything her father had told her true? She closed her eyes still humming softly and fell asleep amongst the dragons of Berk.

7. Chapter 7

Dagur had awoken the next morning to find his Skrill gone; and Camicazi too. He had sent his son to see what he could see without getting spotted. Vott had just returned.

"There's no sign of the Skrill father. But she's with Hiccup in the village. They seem to be fairly curious about her; he's actually quite welcoming to her. His wife is less so. The son doesn't seem to be too sure what to think. Our biggest concern should be the dragons. She's able to connect with them, she might discover that they are not unhappy after all and then what?" he reported back.

"You forget they are still responsible for your mother's death. There is more to this plan than you know yet. But in time I shall explain to you son. She will be Hiccup's undoing, there is no doubt about it."

"Sparky? Where are you boy?" Camicazi called out as she crept through the forest. She'd been unable to search in the morning as Hiccup and the others had been watching her. She had finally managed to steal away and was looking desperately for him. She had already been gone for a while and she worried it might raise suspicions. She had to find Sparky though.

"Sparky?" she called again; she did not want to use her dragon call for fear of being heard in the village. She sighed deeply. She hated not being able to find him. Being away from him was awful, he was the best friend she had ever had, and he was the only true family she had now. He loved her more than she had ever been loved before. He always stayed close to her, no matter what, he had never abandoned her. The bond they shared was stronger than anything she had ever seen before.

She hadn't known it was possible to care or be cared about as much as she and Sparky did for each other before she met him. No one she knew had a bond with anyone that even came close to what they had, she trusted him beyond all reason. She could run off the edge of a cliff and not be afraid, for she knew he would catch her.

"Oh where are you? You've never left me before; please don't let this be the first time. Don't leave me alone boy. I can't do this without you." She spoke this more to herself than anything else. She felt desperately alone suddenly, something she had not felt since before she had met him.

Then she heard it, a soft call in the air. Calling to her, and only to her.

"Sparky!" she cried delighted and she ran without thinking to where the sound was coming from. Had she paid a little more attention to where she was going she might have noticed there was an edge, but she was too keen to reach her dragon to pay it any attention and so fell tumbling into a cove.

She tumbled down the sides of the cove, hitting numerous rocks before crashing into the ground. Groaning she got to her feet and rubbed her back which hurt more than the rest of her.

"Ergh. That'll teach me not to look where I'm going." She stared around her and looked at the place she had landed. It was secluded and beautiful, a lake in the middle of it and trees and rocks surrounding it. It was wonderful here. But what made it truly wonderful to her was when she saw the purple dragon bounding towards her happily.

"SPARKY!" She cried out joyfully, flinging her arms around his neck and falling to her knees to hold him. Sparky looked at her with wide delighted eyes and she knew in a heartbeat he was ok but relieved to see her. She was relieved to see him too.

"Oh Sparky I'm so glad I found you!" She moved to his back and began checking her satchel to make sure nothing had fallen out of it before checking her weapons were still safely harnessed to the saddle. Once certain that the weapons and pieces of her suit were all still there she took it all off of Sparky's back and tucked it away in a small crevice just large enough for him to sleep. He'd be safe here she was sure of it.

"I can't stay long boy, I've already been gone from the village for a while. They'll get suspicious. But I did it boy. I got here, and I found a way in. It's strange; it's nothing like what I was told. Hiccup isn't a huge evil monster who hurts dragons. None of them are. But they are still responsible for much suffering and for that I'll make them pay. I have a lot more to learn, but it'll pay off in the end. I know you're afraid boy..." He snorted trying to tell her he was not afraid at all but she saw through him. "I know the Night Fury makes you uneasy. But don't worry, I'll protect you. He isn't so bad really. He's quite nice, but he's nothing compared to you. You'll be safe here. And if something goes wrong... Find me, or call for me. I'll come to your side as quick as I can." He rumbled to let her know that if she needed him, he'd be there faster than lightning, Night Fury or no Night Fury. She smiled at him and hugged him again, placing a gentle kiss on his forehead.

"Stay safe boy. I'll come and visit you whenever I can. I promise." With that she scrambled up the rocks and left the cove.

She was winding her way back through the trees when she crashed into someone... that someone happened to be her brother.

"Vott!" She hissed "What are you doing?!"

"Checking up on you since you went ahead without me!" He hissed back.

"I can't be seen with you! They think I'm a poor little runaway who got shipwrecked. Or at least that's what I'm trying to spin."

"Well I came to see what was going on. Father sent me. He's not overly pleased that you left without me, or that you took the Skrill with you." Suddenly Vott's true purpose became clear.

"I'm not telling you where he is so you can go back to the ship and tell father that! This is my moment! I don't need you!" she snapped. Something told her there was a reason she was able to get here without her brother. There was a reason the Night Fury had shot her down. There was a reason that Hiccup had found her, that she'd met the dragons by singing dragonsong, that she'd been bought to that family. She didn't yet know what the Gods had planned, but she knew it was a plan for her, not for Vott. Finally she had a chance to stand out from her brother. To do something he could not. To prove she was just as worthy as he was.

"Get out of here before someone sees you!" She growled, pushing him away.

"There's no one anywhere near here!" He snapped back

"They ride dragons you muttonhead! Just because no one is here now, they could be here in a flash! They could be flying through the forest and watching us! Now go before you ruin everything!" She snapped shoving him so hard that he fell over. He turned to glare at her before running off to rejoin their father.

Breathing a sigh of relief she ran her hand through her blonde hair, twisting it so that her braid fell more neatly and pushing the loose strands out of her face. She turned to walk back to the village when she heard voices... several voices but they were all fairly young in tone.

"Come on, it'll be good practice!" said the first voice

"I don't know, sounds pretty stupid to me" said a another

"It's completely stupid! There's a reason Dad doesn't want it here, going looking for it is about the stupidest idea you've ever had!" A boy with red brown messy hair said as he stepped into the clearing, looking back over his shoulder at his companions as he did so.

"Woah, who's that?" A stocky boy with black hair and watery blue eyes said as he spotted her.

"Camicazi? What are you doing out here?" The boy with reddish brown hair asked. She could not remember his name for the life of her but knew he was Hiccup's son.

"I guess I can't get used to the idea that I'm safe in the village here. Back home I run to the forest or the mountains so that I'm safe, so no one can hurt me." What was rather depressing was that this was not entirely a lie. Back on Hysteria she did used to run off so she wouldn't have to deal with her father, the soldiers or her brother and his stupid friends.

"It's ok, we'll look after you. All of us. Let's get you back to the village." Hiccup's son said and he led them all back the way they came. "My name's Finn by the way, I don't think I was properly introduced to you..." Finn began but he was barged out of the way by the larger boy.

"I'm Rufflout, I'll look after you. You should stick close to me and I'll fight off any loser who tries to hurt you. I'm a brilliant warrior and well on my way to becoming a great dragon trainer too." This boy was already annoying Camicazi. He kept shoving Finn and going on about how great he was... And worst of all... He was hitting on her. She'd always hated it when the Hysteria boys hit on her, this muttonhead was no exception, and she knew what to do.

She held up a hand to silence him and he grinned expectantly. Taking a cautious step towards him she slipped one arm around his neck and the other took his hand. His grin broadened. She smiled at him then yanked hard on his hair and twisted his arm around and behind his back.

"DON'T EVER HIT ON ME AGAIN!" She hissed and she shoved him violently to the ground. Straightening back up she pushed the strands of hair that had fallen out of place again back behind her ear. "You were saying?" She said smiling sweetly at Finn and the others.

"That was awesome! Can we keep you? Just to put Rufflout back in his place?" Finn laughed. She knew he was joking but her gaze darkened.

"No one owns me. No one is 'keeping' me like an animal." She growled.

"I didn't mean it like that! I was just joking, just implying that if you stuck around you'd be great at keeping him in line!" Finn stuttered. Her expression softened. He was quite frightened of her it seemed, not surprising after what she'd just done, but he needn't worry that she'd hurt him. Not yet, it was his father she was here for to get revenge on after all.

"Sorry, I'm used to things like that being literal. No one jokes where I come from." Again, this was sadly true. No one really had much of a sense of humour on Hysteria.

"It sounds like a really awful place. No wonder you don't want go back, who would? Why return somewhere where you'll be hit and abused and where no one has a sense of humour?" Much to her concern, she pondered these words for there was an element of truth in it, why return somewhere where she was mistreated? Why? She would not think like that, after the job was done things would change, she was sure

of it. "Come on; let's get back to the village. People will wonder where we all are else." Finn said and he gently nudged her forwards and she walked beside him, an odd feeling of familiarity growing within her and even stranger, a feeling of equality.

8. Chapter 8

The young Vikings led her back into the heart of the village and only stopped when a large beefy man with a hook for a hand and a peg leg stepped in front of them. He had no beard but a long moustache which was braided down past his chin and he was totally bald beneath his helmet. He looked quite intimidating to Camicazi but yet when he spoke he sounded very friendly and jovial.

"And where have you lot been?" He asked the youths before his eyes settled on Camicazi. "Ah this must be our mystery girl."

"Yes, Gobber this is Camicazi. Camicazi, this is Gobber, our blacksmith and dragon doctor. He also does most of our physical training. My parents do the dragon training." Finn said gesturing between the two people.

"Huh well, you lot missed your training earlier so you'll have to catch up now. Finn you still need to work on your hand to hand combat, you're improving with the sword but Buffnut can still disarm you too easily." Gobber said firmly, though not unkindly which was all her father ever did. "We'll start with hand to hand combat. Let's get to the arena and get started."

Camicazi stood uncertainly. She did not know what to do now, was she to be taken somewhere else? Left in someone's care?

"What about the girl?" Rufflout asked jerking a thumb in her direction. She glared at him and punched him in the stomach.

"I have a name!" she yelled as he bent over winded.

"Ok... I'm sorry" he wheezed. Gobber raised his busy brow at her.

"Impressive hit there Camicazi. I take it you went through a lot of training back home." Gobber said making Camicazi nervous and bite her lip.

"No... I wasn't allowed to learn to fight. I couldn't attend training, so I taught myself, and sometimes my guardian would teach me a few moves." She felt her cheeks burn and she looked at her feet instead.

"Eh, we'll take her with us. I'm afraid you won't be able to join in though lass, Astrid would have my guts for garters if I allowed it. Until she and the Chief decide what to do, you'll just have to sit there I'm afraid." She was used to being told she couldn't join in with training but what she found odd was that Gobber did seem genuinely sorry that she had to just sit there. She nodded to show her understanding and followed them all to the arena.

"I don't think the rest of us were introduced to you." Said a chubby boy with fair hair that stuck up awkwardly under his helmet. "I'm

Gudrun Ingerman"

"Miktak" said a thin gangly boy with reddish blonde hair and freckles.

"And I'm his sister Buffnut" grinned a girl who looked very much like Miktak except her hair was a shade darker than his.

"Alright, Buffnut, Finn you two first." Gobber said. Buffnut grinned and hit a fist to her palm.

"Aw come on! Why do I always have to fight Buffnut?! That's just not fair!" Finn complained. Buffnut was just about to punch Finn when Camicazi left out a shocked exclamation.

"Woah woah woah woah, wait... She's allowed to train? To fight? To hit the boys and not get in trouble for it?"

"Yeah. I mean, I hit my brother all the time..." Buffnut began.

"That's insane! I used to get into trouble if I so much as pinched my brother! I wasn't allowed to show him up, my guardian let me fight sometimes but as a general rule girls were banned from fighting and training on my island! Not that there are many girls on my island... I may have been the only one... But still this is completely crazy! Girls can actually fight here?!"

"Of course." Gobber said surprised. "Finn's mother Astrid is one of our best warriors. Everyone can fight or train here." Camicazi's jaw dropped, she couldn't help it. She'd never been allowed to fight; women were not allowed to be warriors back on Hysteria. The Berserker soldiers were all men, and that was the law back home. No matter how good she was she would never be allowed to be a warrior.

"Ok that is... awesome!" Her eyes widened in delight and she watched in slight amazement as they all trained. After hand to hand combat they began training with weapons, Camicazi couldn't help but notice Finn seemed to be struggling, there was obviously skill there, he just hadn't harnessed it yet. After Buffnut had knocked him to the ground for the third time they took a break and Camicazi found she couldn't fight the urge to say something any longer.

"You know, you could have prevented that defeat if you'd kicked her legs out from under her. She doesn't watch what she's doing with her feet, that's her weak spot. She's got bad foot work." She said quietly as he rubbed his side.

"What do you mean?" He groaned.

"Eurgh boys." She groaned under her breath. "I'd show you but I'm not allowed. Look Finn, I can help you work on your fighting skills but only if you'll let me."

"Gobber," Finn suddenly called out "I want to see Camicazi fight."

"WHAT?!" The others all yelled.

"I want to see what she can do." He looked determined. "I don't care

what my mother thinks, I want to see this."

Gobber grinned. "Alright then lass, who shall we start you with?"

"Ooh me! Me me me me me!" Rufflout yelped excitedly.

"Easy there Rufflout or you'll wet yourself!" Miktak sniggered.

"Alright then, Camicazi lass, you'll fight Rufflout first. Good luck."

She scoffed. "Oh please, at least challenge me." She stood up and walked towards him in the centre of the arena to begin their fight.

"Weapons or no weapons?" She asked

"Weapons. I don't want to break that pretty face with my fist."

"You'd die before you got near my face believe you me."

Rufflout and Camicazi were handed an axe each and then Gobber retreated and counted them down. As soon as he yelled "FIGHT!" Camicazi darted forwards towards Rufflout who was running at her with his axe held high over his head and yelling loudly. Just before she reached him she ducked beneath his outstretched arms and rolled away, landing perfectly on her feet in a low crouch and leaping up and kicking him hard in the back before he could turn around. As soon as he hit the floor she kicked him onto his back and pinned him with one foot, placing the curve of the axe under his chin and smirking.

"Surrender?" He struggled and groaned for a full minute before eventually admitting defeat. The others all whooped and cheered as she stepped away victorious.

"Who's next then?" She chuckled running her hands through her hair again. She fought and defeated Gudrun in a matter of seconds, Miktak she pinned down with her bare hands after five minutes, she and Buffnut were more evenly matched but she still had no trouble beating her as easily as she'd beaten Miktak.

Finally Finn stepped forwards to fight her. She smiled and spoke to him as she circled each other slowly.

"Remember to watch your feet, find my weakness. And never let me see yours. Turn my strength against me." He ran at her and she dodged causing him to fall face first onto the floor. "Not good enough, you fall like that in battle and I'll have you gutted in minutes. Never put so much force into a charge that you won't be able to keep your balance if your opponent dodges." She told him as he pulled himself back to his feet.

"Like this," She ran at him "Dodge now!" She yelled and he stepped to the side, she turned on the spot and skidded again, placing one hand on the ground and the hand with the sword in it above and behind her before leaping forwards, both feet leaving the ground sending her

forward in a powerful leap that would have ended very badly for Finn had he not stepped aside again. She rolled across the ground and was back on her feet before he had a chance to turn on her.

"It's all about speed, about defence as much as attack. If your defence is weak then your attack will be pointless." She said thrusting the sword towards him, instinctively his arm shot forwards to defend himself with his own. "Good! Now don't hesitate, strike back as soon as you parry my blow!" She continued yelling such instructions for the following ten minutes before she finally knocked his sword from his hand almost lazily and kicking him to the ground.

"Most importantly, never let your guard down; never let your enemy disarm you." She snapped leaning over him, her sword pressed into his belly. He squirmed for a second and then gave up, she grinned and let him stand up, chucking him his sword.

"You've got the skills Finn, they just need fine-tuning." She chuckled and sat back down as if nothing had happened at all. The teens and Gobber were all staring at her wide-eyed and stunned.

"For someone who was not allowed to be trained in fighting, you've got a lot of skill yourself lass." Gobber said. "If they decide you're safe to stay here, I'd like to train you myself and see how you progress. I reckon you could be as good of a warrior as Astrid, you'd make a formidable team if you worked together." As if hearing the discussion both Astrid and Hiccup soared in on their dragons, followed by a large man with a magnificent red beard, two people on a Zippleback, another on a Gronckle and one on a Monstrous Nightmare.

"There she is!" Hiccup gasped. Camicazi braced herself to be brutally beaten as he dismounted. "We wondered where you'd gone! No one had seen you since this morning." She blinked confused, no beating? What sort of place was this?

"Has she been here the whole time?" Astrid asked Gobber pushing her hair back the same way that Camicazi had only minutes before.

"She's been here since the kids arrived. We bought her with us." Gobber said.

"We found her in the forest." Finn said. Hiccup and Astrid both then asked the same question, but to different people.

"What were you doing in the forest?" Hiccup asked Finn whilst Astrid asked it to Camicazi.

"Ummm..." Finn stuttered on his words and stared at the floor awkwardly as his father stared at him. Camicazi though looked at Astrid without any fear, completely un-intimidated.

"Back home I got used to running into the woods or to the mountains to escape from everyone. It was my instinct, as soon as someone stops watching me, I run. It's the way I've lived for years now. Forgive me if I find it hard to kick the habit." She said staring back at Astrid with determined and fierce eyes. Astrid matched her gaze.

"Finn... What were you all doing in the forest?" Hiccup asked again,

his voice firmer now. Camicazi could see the Chief behind the gentle features now.

"Err... well... Rufflout thought it would be a good idea to find the Skrill you said you'd seen and run it out of Berk so we were actually going to look for it when we ran into Camicazi." He mumbled, still not looking up into his father's bright green eyes. Both Astrid and Camicazi stopped staring at each other and looked at Finn. Astrid to tell off her son, Camicazi because he has mentioned the Skrill... Sparky.

"Finn what were you thinking?" Astrid demanded. "You know how dangerous Skrills are! You all do! How could you have been so foolish? What if you'd found it?" She snapped at them all.

"You're all in trouble for this. You know better than that, especially you Finn. I'm very disappointed in you, and that's not something I ever have to say to you." Hiccup said looking at Finn with a tragic gaze. Even Camicazi felt bad and ashamed of herself looking at that gaze.

"I'm sorry Dad. It was stupid. I should have put my foot down and said no. I'll do better next time."

"Good, I only say it Finn because I can't stand the idea of what would've happened to you, any of you had you actually found that Skrill." Hiccup's gaze softened as he looked at them all. The other riders were dismounting as well now and walking over to the various youths. They stood beside them and then looked at Camicazi, only the red-bearded man didn't stand by one of the teens; he stood beside Gobber and Hiccup and joined the rest in looking at her. Camicazi forced herself not to cower under their gaze.

"So this is the one you told us about is it Hiccup?" The man with his hand on Rufflout's shoulder asked.

"Yep, that's her Snotlout." He replied watching Camicazi carefully. She couldn't stand being under the gaze of his. She felt sure he was going to see right through her if he gazed much more intently, she turned to look at the other adult riders who had come in. Looking at them, it wasn't hard to tell they were the parents of the youths they stood beside. Gudrun looked just like the man standing beside him who had ridden in on the Gronckle. Rufflout look very similar to Snotlout. The only one that stumped her a little was Miktak and Buffnut, the adults with them were clearly twins but which one was the parent?

"So what are you going to do with her there Hiccup?" Asked the male twin.

"Keep an eye on her for now. Astrid's right, she's unknown so we can't trust her, but she's still only a child so I won't cast her out."

"So you're going to let her stay then son?" The red-bearded man said. This confused Camicazi initially and then she realised he was still speaking to Hiccup, that would make him Stoick the Vast, Hiccup's father. She hadn't realised he was still alive.

"Yes. She's just a child, I can't just send her away, it's a

dangerous world out there and I won't take the chance on sending her away for her to get hurt." He looked meaningfully at his father and then at Astrid.

"But she..." Astrid began

"Until we have more knowledge about her, she stays under supervision." Hiccup said firmly indicating that the topic was no longer up for discussion.

"But Hiccup, she..." Camicazi had had enough.

"Would you mind not speaking about me as if I'm not even here? I'm standing right here, I can hear everything you're saying. Don't just say 'she's this' 'she's that' when I'm here!" She snapped at them all causing them all to stop and stare at her. She ignored this until she noticed Hiccup's green eyes looking at her again, a look of surprise and curiosity in them. Again she shied away from his gaze.

"I've made my choice. Camicazi can stay for now. But I won't take chances; I want her to be under constant supervision. She goes nowhere without an escort." Hiccup stated. The discussion was done. Her head slumped, an escort. She'd never get to sneak off to see Sparky if she was watched all the time. How would she warn him to stay hidden if they began searching for him? She should have sent him to the nearby island that she knew to be populated only by dragons. At least he'd have been safe from people there, but perhaps the dragons would be a bigger threat to him. She just had to think of a way to keep him safe and away from both her father, and from being chased away by Hiccup and the others.

"Let's go." Hiccup said to the others. "Camicazi, you're coming with me for now." He informed her as he climbed back onto Toothless' back. She walked over and climbed on with ease and settled herself comfortably behind Hiccup, again though she felt no need to hang onto Hiccup as they took off.

9. Chapter 9

Gobber and Stoick watched as Hiccup and the others left with the youngsters.

"It's still something I can't quite get used to, seeing Hiccup as a father and a Chief. Taking charge and putting his foot down." Stoick said as they watched him leave. "Makes me feel proud but old as well. I'm a grandfather."

"Aye, makes me feel old too Stoick. But that boy of yours has done a great job so far. He's a good father to that boy. Astrid is a great mother too." Gobber thought back to thirteen years ago but said nothing, it was something no one mentioned anymore, mostly in front of Hiccup and Astrid. Sometimes it would still be discussed in hushed whispers but Gobber always restrained from saying much about it, in front of Stoick, Hiccup and Astrid especially.

"That they are. That boy'll do 'em both proud I'm sure of it."

"That new lass your boy found though..." Gobber began and then shrugged.

"What about her? Do you think she has an ulterior motive?"

"Oh probably, but that's not what I'm getting at."

"What are you getting at then Gobber?"

"Well I was watching her, she said that she's not allowed to fight on her island but she learnt behind the backs of those who impose the law. She fought the others; she was helping Finn to improve... Her style of fighting, her strength and such... well it just reminds me of another lass who was determined to prove herself and be a great fighter many years ago..." Gobber glanced sideways to see if Stoick would catch his meaning. He didn't seem to be and looked at Gobber confused.

Gobber sighed.

"And I don't know if you noticed, she's got bright green eyes. Very similar to someone else's..." Stoick continued to look stumped for a minute and then let out a gasp.

"You don't suppose...?"

Hiccup and Astrid landed outside their home. Astrid stared at Hiccup, her blue eyes gazing into him, piercing his very heart with the look she gave him.

"Astrid, take Finn. I want to talk to Camicazi." She glared at him but didn't argue. Camicazi suddenly realized as she flew away, she had the perfect opportunity here, she was alone with Hiccup. She hadn't planned on killing him this soon but if the Gods were giving her the opportunity now who was she to refuse it.

"I'm just going to settle Toothless and then I would like to speak to you. I'd appreciate it if you would wait here. I'll only be a minute." He said gently and then he and Toothless walked up the stairs.

She quickly turned around and began searching for a weapon to use on him when the door opened and a woman stepped into the room. It was not Astrid though.

"So it's you is it?" She asked. Camicazi wasn't sure what she was getting at, if she was even speaking to her.

"Is who what?" She asked.

"It was you who sang the dragonsong last night is it not?"

"Sang what?" Camicazi asked, she had no idea what dragonsong was.

"You sang to the dragons last night did you not?"

"Yes, I did sing to them." She said embarrassed.

"How do you know dragonsong?"

"I don't know what this dragonsong thing is you keep talking about

alright? I just sang. The song I sang, I don't really remember how I know it, I just know it. I just sort of, it's like a memory from a very distant dream. Why do you care anyway?" She snapped.

"Because the song you sang is known to very few people, and it has not been heard on Berk for thirteen years."

"So what? I fail to see how that affects me."

"I would like to know where you learnt that song."

"I told you, I don't know. I just know it."

"Well then perhaps you can tell me this... what is your opinion on dragons?"

"I think dragons are amazing, they should be respected."

"Hmmm... Would you step outside for one moment?"

"Hiccup said to stay put." She said, though she wasn't entirely sure why she was obeying, except that she intended to dispatch him when he returned.

"He will not mind, I want to see something." She hesitated so the woman called up to Hiccup "Hiccup, I am borrowing the girl for a minute, I shall bring her back in a moment."

"Sure, her name is Camicazi by the way. She doesn't like being referred to as 'she' or 'girl'" He said peering down and grinning. Camicazi glowered and followed the woman out of the door.

Outside waiting patiently was a large dragon, one that had sat beside her the previous night. It looked up at her and then let out a deep rumble, as if it wanted to tell her something. She couldn't help herself, she stepped forwards and held out her hand for it. The dragon gently placed it's head on her palm and continued rumbling at her.

"Hello to you too." She whispered stroking it gently, she scratched behind the crested ears on it's head and it growled contentedly.

"His name is..."

"Cloudjumper." Camicazi finished, surprising even herself. She looked up at the woman shocked. But the woman simply smiled down at her.

"Sit with me Camicazi." Camicazi did, feeling surprised. She'd spoken to Sparky before, and she felt sure she'd understood him, but she thought it was just because she knew him so well. "My name is Valka. I know what you are."

"What's that supposed to mean?" Camicazi asked panicked, did Valka know she was a Berserker?

"You are a Dragon-Whisperer. You are not alone though."

"I'm a what?"

"A Dragon-Whisperer. You can connect with the dragons in a way most others cannot, you can understand them more easily. Form a bond with them. I am a Dragon-Whisperer, as is Hiccup. It sometimes runs in family lines" Valka told her. Camicazi wondered then, for the first time maybe ever, who her biological parents were. She had never thought about them much since she found out her mother was not her mother when she was five, but knowing that Dragon-Whisperers sometimes came in a family line made her suddenly curious. If she really was one as Valka was suggesting, she must have a family member somewhere who was too.

"Do you really think I'm a Dragon-Whisperer?" She breathed, hardly daring to believe it.

"I am certain of it. The dragons know it too." She said smiling as Cloudjumper nuzzled her. Camicazi grinned and hugged him.

"You said Hiccup is a Dragon-Whisperer too, is he... is he your son?" Camicazi asked curiously. Valka nodded. Yet another thing her father had neglected to tell her, Hiccup had both his parents still. And he was a Dragon-Whisperer. Though her father probably did not know that.

"May I take Camicazi back now?" Hiccup's voice asked softly from behind her. She suddenly felt like she was waking from a dream, she had forgotten for a moment what she had been meaning to do.

"Certainly." Valka said and she gestured to Cloudjumper that they were leaving. The dragon nuzzled Camicazi again before turning and leaving. She followed Hiccup into the house and looked around for a weapon again, trying not to draw attention to herself.

"How long have you been flying?" Camicazi was too busy scouting the room with her eyes to really pay attention to the question.

"Six years give or take." She said and kept searching, there had been axes and swords everywhere yesterday, why were there none now?

"That's quite a while, how old are you anyway?"

"Thirteen."

"So you've been flying since you were seven? Impressive. Who took you flying? Who taught you?"

"No one. I taught myself." Hiccup had sat down but she hadn't really noticed and began walking around the room looking for a weapon.

"Really? That is impressive. I taught myself, but I was fifteen when I met Toothless. Where did you meet your dragon?"

"On the side of a mountain. It was a stormy night, I was out longer than I planned and needed shelter from the lightning and ducked into a cave and there he was."

"How did you train him?"

"I sang. He calmed down and stopped sparking at me. He seemed pretty weak and tired. After I began singing he let me get close to him. But in the end, he came to me." She finally turned around and saw Hiccup was sat down perfectly calmly watching her.

"What sort of dragon is he?" It suddenly struck her that she had been answering his questions without thinking, at all. Now she was in trouble.

"Umm..." She froze, her cheeks flushing. His green eyes locked onto her own and then he did something unexpected, he smiled.

"You really weren't thinking were you?" He was still smiling as he stood up and walked towards her. "I'm guessing your dragon, and your ability to train them wasn't much appreciated back home so you kept them secret."

"Yes. For the most part anyway." She hardly dared to breathe. If she said the wrong thing now, everything would be ruined. Everything.

"Is that why you left? Did they try and hurt your dragon when they found out about it?" Everything seemed to be hitting Camicazi at once as Hiccup stood in front of her, looking down at her with those green eyes that she was sure could see through her.

"They hate dragons. They kill them back home. The only place you find them is in the mountains because usually no human can get there. I went there to learn about them, and then I met Sparky. I trained him. First just with calls and hand signals then after a while I rode him. I kept him secret for three years, afraid of what my father and the others would do to him if they found him. I was used to being hit, it happened often for me. After three years though... Well things changed. My father told me about a vile group of people who locked dragons up and used them. Making them do their bidding at the hands of soldiers with whips and bludgeons. He told me that those people were the ones who killed my mother. It made me angry, I wanted to hurt them. I revealed Sparky to my father..." She didn't know why she was telling him all of this, but now she had started, she couldn't stop. It made her eyes water as she thought about what happened next.

"He said Sparky would be perfect to use against these people, he's very powerful you see. Father wanted to harness that and punish them. But he was not kind to Sparky. I got hit more in the three years that followed than I had been before. I would stand between the whip and my dragon, and then after that I would be punished for interfering. I was forever being hit." Nervously she pushed up the back of her shirt allowing him to see the scars on her back that she usually pretended did not exist. Hiccup stared horrified at the scars; some began to bleed as they caught on her shirt suggesting they were very recent.

"We were travelling to the island of these people when I decided I would not risk Sparky. I broke him out and flew away. He's the best friend I've ever had; he's my only real family. My mother took me in when I was only a baby. She found me. My father never loved me, never cared. No matter how hard I tried to please him, he never cared. And then he hurt the one thing I loved most in the world. I couldn't let

that happen. I won't let it happen again." She was crying now. Hiccup looked at the scars on her back again and then at the tears streaming down her face. Without really thinking about it, he crouched down and put his arms around her and hugged her tightly.

"Shhhh, it's ok. Don't cry. You're ok now. I promise." He assured her soothingly, holding her tight and rubbing her back gently as only a father knows how to. Camicazi broke down. Was this how it felt to be loved by another person? To be hugged by a father? To be cared about? It felt wonderful, but yet it just made her feel worse, she was meant to kill him and yet here she was crying uncontrollably onto his shoulder as he held her tight and comforted her. She could not fail in her mission, she couldn't. But the longer he held her, the longer she cried, the more she found herself feeling safe and happy in his arms.

"It's not ok. I'm a failure. The Gods hate me." She sobbed softly clutching at Hiccup as if he alone could keep her safe from the world.

"I used to think the same thing," he said holding her away from him enough that he could look at her. "Then the Gods let me find Toothless... And he didn't just become my friend; he became the friend who gave me my purpose. I wouldn't be here without him. You're too young to believe you're a failure. You just haven't discovered your destiny yet is all."

"I thought I had." She whispered through her tears. "I thought that getting revenge, doing as my father wanted was my destiny... But now, I must be a failure because I don't know if I can do it anymore."

"Hey, it's alright. Revenge isn't usually the answer. Grudges don't have to be to the death. Just ask Toothless" He said grinning. Nothing Camicazi had ever been told seemed to be true, nothing she had ever known held up. She didn't know what was real anymore.

"I don't know what's real anymore. Nothing I was told seems to be true. How can I know what's real when everything I thought I knew was a lie?" She began crying more and Hiccup held her again, hushing her gently. He held her tight and began whispering something quietly, a song, a lullaby of sorts...

The baby looked up at the man standing over her. She didn't know much at this tender age, but she knew he loved her. She felt it when he looked at her with those eyes. Somewhere close by the dragons were purring, she was not afraid of them. The man picked her up, keeping her wrapped up in the blankets he held her close to him and began to sing a strange lullaby, he might have been singing it fairly poorly but she didn't care. The song soothed her and his voice was one she associated with safety and love. The dragons stirred and the black one walked over to where he sat cradling her and stared down at her with bright emerald green eyes. She stretched out a tiny hand which he held with a single finger. The dragon dipped its head towards her and he carefully raised her little hand to touch the dragons' nose. He sang the song all the while. She loved it and knew she would never forget it; the words were engraved on her heart, the tune written within her. Dragonsong. The first lullaby and last lullaby she would ever know...

Camicazi opened her eyes suddenly and stared at Hiccup as she pulled away from him. He looked at her with those bright green eyes. They felt familiar, just as the song had. The faint recollection of infancy. For the first time in her life she recalled her biological family. Her father had sung the same song, dragonsong. And there had been a dragon... She felt suddenly afraid and stepped away from Hiccup. Her fear got the better of her as Astrid walked into the house with Finn. She crashed into Astrid and looked up at her like a frightened child.

"Shhh it's ok. I'm here. It's ok baby." The woman soothed rocking her baby gently in her arms as the dragon lay beside her, the dragon chirped, staring at the baby with her bright yellow eyes. "She won't hurt you. I promise." She placed the baby's hand on the dragon who rumbled happily and the baby recognised the sound, it was the same dragon call she'd heard when she had been in her mother's belly. She looked back into her mother's eyes and stopped crying knowing she was loved.

Astrid stared at her surprised and Camicazi kept backing away, watching both of them a look of terror upon her beautiful features.

"Cami? Are you ok?" Finn asked tentatively. She was growing on him, like the sister he had never known. He hoped she was ok. But as soon as he asked her she looked even more terrified than she had before.

"Are you ok baby?" The little boy asked her as she lay there watching the ceiling, listening to the yelling and fighting. "Don't worry baby. Mummy and Daddy will be back soon." There was another blast and she started to cry. "Don't cry baby sister! I'll go get Daddy!"

Gasping for air, frightened Camicazi ran from the house. She ran as fast as she could when she crashed into Valka.

"Camicazi? Are you alright?" Cloudjumper nudged her and Stoick walked over with Gobber.

"Do you see it Stoick? She looks just like them don't you think?" Gobber asked

"But can it really be?"

Camicazi turned and ran towards the forest as fast as her legs would carry her. She couldn't take this. The thought of having once had a family, of being loved was too much, especially when combined with being shown love and care by the person she was supposed to kill. As she ran she let out a shrieking call that echoed for a long way and then ran to the only safety, the only true thing she had.

Sparky sat up hearing the call, the call of distress. She needed him. But with that call, it would be a miracle if she hadn't been heard by the Night Fury and the people. He grabbed her satchel and weapons in his mouth and flew out of the cove and towards her.

Sparky landed swiftly in front of her a minute later. Sobbing she hugged him tightly before grabbing her satchel and weapons. She pulled the pieces of her suit on and tied her leather helmet onto her head, fastened her weapons across her back then sat on Sparky.

"Let's get out of here. Head for the island with the volcano, we'll hide out there for now. Evasive cloud manoeuvres." She said through her tears and Sparky obeyed, sparing into the clouds and off into the night sky.

Hiccup stood up again and Astrid froze. All over the village the dragons froze, and those who recognised dragon calls stopped in their tracks. They could hear a dragon call, a distressed one.

"That dragon doesn't sound very happy. Are you going to help it Dad?" Finn asked but Hiccup was looking worriedly at his wife.

"Hiccup is that..."

"A Skrill call. Yes it is. It's here somewhere. I'm going to find it and send it away, and try and find Camicazi too. If she's run off scared, she might run into it."

"Be careful Hiccup, just remember the lightning from the Skrill is attracted to metal and you guys are wearing a lot of that." Astrid said a look of concern etched on her beautiful face.

"I will be, I promise." Hiccup replied putting an arm around her before kissing her briefly. "Stay safe, both of you." And with that he and Toothless left.

Hiccup and Toothless soared over Berk searching for the Skrill but couldn't seem to find a trace of it when...

"Woah! What was that?" Hiccup asked as they circled back over the area close the cove.

"EVASIVE CLOUD MANOEUVRES!" A voice called from the forest and a shape darted up to the sky. "Let's get out of here boy. I can't deal with all this right now."

Hiccup froze. Someone was riding a dragon. The question now became, was it the Skrill? In which case how in the name of Thor was someone riding it? How had they trained it? He tried to follow but couldn't see it anywhere.

"Let's keep searching bud"

"You lied to me!" Camicazi yelled through the stream of tears. "Everything you ever told me was a lie! Were they even present when she died?!"

"Stop being so stupid. Levi, get that dragon under control, Vott, take Camicazi to the hold." Dagur spat. Camicazi though kept yelling at him.

"I came here to kill Hiccup, for her. For the dragons you told me were enslaved... And then I find out it was all a lie! You left out a lot of details like his son, his parents, the fact that he isn't a

monster!"

"Where's my whip?" He snapped and one of the soldiers handed it to him. "You disobeyed me, you stole the Skrill, you are now yelling at me. You will be punished for this."

"GO AHEAD! Strike me again! You've done it a thousand times before!" She screamed. But he raised the whip over the Skrill. "NO! NO! LEAVE SPARKY ALONE!"

"I told you we are not calling it such a stupid childish name!"

"BE MAD AT ME BUT PLEASE, JUST DON'T HURT SPARKY!"

"THIS IS YOUR PUNISHMENT. WATCH YOUR DRAGON SUFFER!"

"NOO!" She shrieked and then she did something stupid. She leapt once more between Dagur and the Skrill, crying out in pain as the whip made contact with her flesh. Having had her flight suit taken from her when she landed, only a thin shirt protected her from the full force of the whip. After the first strike it tore leaving her already scarred back open to abuse. The whip struck her again, and again. Dagur did not seem to care if he hit her or the Skrill.

"You will not fail me I hope." He hissed in her ear as she collapsed to her knees from the strain of her beating. "Your precious dragon's life depends on it. Vott, take her back to shore. The rest of you secure the dragon." He spat dragging her to her feet and throwing her forcibly into a small rowboat.

Hiccup had been flying when he thought he'd heard his own words echoing back to him from the past "Be mad at me, just please don't hurt Toothless!"

But this time the name had been Sparky. Hiccup wondered if it was the mysterious rider, but then recalled Camicazi mentioning a dragon by that name but who could she be talking to? Hiccup flew towards where the sound had come from.

"Dagur." Hiccup gasped recognising the crest on the ships mast, lightning was flashing over the boat and Hiccup knew a Skrill had been here. He headed back to Berk. He had to prepare the village. But where could Camicazi be? Toothless did not seem to want to turn around and go back and this made Hiccup curious.

"Bud, we've got to go." Reluctantly the dragon turned away from the Berserker fleet and headed back to the safety of the forest. Hiccup could feel Toothless tensing, something had him on edge, something was angering him and that could not be good news.

11. Chapter 11

Camicazi tried to find some strength inside her to fight her brother and the other Viking boys who man-handled her onto and off the boat but her father had not held back when he had whipped her. The pain was not easing. She had been hit many times before but it never got easier, each new hit reopened old wounds and tore new ones in her pale flesh. She wished she could call them battle scars but these were the scars of her childhood, of her very existence. But since

Sparky they had become the scars that signified her bond and her love for the dragon. Her scars were her badge of honour. She could hear the boys laughing at her, enjoying watching her look so helpless. If she could have found the strength she'd had beaten them all the way to Valhalla.

"Devri, wipe clean those gashes and give her the fresh shirt. If they see those they may wonder where they came from." Vott drawled lazily, throwing a wet rag and shirt to his best friend. Devri grinned nastily; he was twice Camicazi's size, incredibly stupid and incredibly vile. She was only thirteen but he was already eyeing her with hungry eyes. He leaned forwards excitedly and she summoned the little strength she had and twisted his arm around before punching him in the nose and snatching the shirt and rag from him.

"Don't ever try and touch me again." She spat pulling the fresh shirt over her old one and covering her bloody wounds. "Just get me to the forest and then get out of here." She hissed at Vott through gritted teeth. She would not let them see her cry because of the gashes on her back. No one ever saw her cry, they never would. With a jolt of discomfort she remembered that she had broken down and cried in front of Hiccup not that long ago. How could she face him now? But she had to somehow. She had to kill him, now she knew she had no choice. Sparky's life depended upon it. She may not truly want to do it anymore, but she would not risk Sparky. He was literally all she had.

"Ahh!" She yelled as Devri threw her over his shoulder and the boys dragged her through the forest and dumped her at the edge of the village before running away again. She fell on her back, the rough ground catching her fresh whip marks and causing her to yelp in pain. She crawled into the shadows, seeking shelter anywhere that might be empty. Breathing heavily she heaved herself to her feet and began the long walk to the academy.

She finally arrived and collapsed against a wall and sobbed. The pain on her back was excruciating but it was nothing compared to the battle in her heart. Her fear for Sparky becoming her only thought and feeling, heightening the pain and dulling her other senses. She sobbed for a long time, trying to find something in her memories to soothe her, but she found nothing. Everything she remembered just caused her more pain. She whispered tearfully words she barely knew, trying to calm herself as they calmed Sparky, but she failed. The words were just empty echoes of a life she had never had, and never would have. She cried more and prayed to Thor asking that he protect Sparky from harm. She cared not what happened to her, only that he was safe. But she knew unless she killed Hiccup and bought turmoil to Berk Sparky would not be safe, so she asked Magni to give her the strength to do what she must. She had to protect Sparky the only way she could.

She stayed there for a while, just crying and praying when eventually a dragon crept out of the dark and into the academy. She recognised its sleek build, and cried more.

"Toothless." She sobbed and he walked over to her, the sky was now as black as his scales. He must have snuck away she decided for Hiccup was nowhere to be seen. Toothless padded over to her softly and nuzzled her face as if trying to wipe away her tears, his pink tongue poked out and he gently licked her face free of tears.

"Toothless don't. Please, I don't deserve your affection..." She whimpered but the dragon would not listen, he nudged her forwards so she had to stand up to stop him from making her face plant the floor. It appeared though this was exactly what Toothless had wanted though; he stepped up and jerked his head, telling her to climb onto his back. She shook her head. She would not go back, not yet, and not on his dragon. Not when she had to kill him. Toothless then proceeded to dive down and take out her legs, causing her to fall onto his back. Without waiting for her to steady herself he darted out of the arena and began to head back to the main body of the village. Camicazi clung onto him and cried more. She hated herself right at this moment. She came here with cold-blooded revenge on her mind, and hate and murder in her heart. She had come ready and willing, almost excited to kill Hiccup and watch Berk burn. Now, now she'd have given almost anything to not have that hanging over her. But the only thing she would not give was Sparky, and tragically, that was exactly what she would have to give if she didn't want to kill Hiccup.

Toothless let out a sympathetic rumble which she felt go right through her, though she knew he meant it as comfort and affection it just hurt her heart more. She didn't really want to kill Hiccup anymore, he had shown her kindness. And she could see that he loved his family, and they loved him. She didn't want to destroy that, she remembered him saying to Astrid that he wouldn't let anyone tear their family apart again, and yet he had welcomed her with open arms when she was planning on doing exactly that. She had seen how much he loved the dragons, how much he loved Toothless and how much Toothless loved him. She hated to do anything to wreck that, the bond between dragon and rider was a wonderful bond and she did not want to break it between anyone. But she loved Sparky and could not and would not risk him for anything. She would do whatever it took to keep him safe.

Toothless settled down outside of Hiccup's house and called loudly. Hiccup came running out a moment later.

"Toothless! Bud are you ok? What's the problem?" He stopped as he came within a metre of Toothless and Camicazi. Emotionally drained and physically in pain Camicazi could not summon the strength to dismount gracefully and stand, nor to run and hide. She just slid and fell off of Toothless' back and collapsed in a heap on the ground.

"Camicazi!" She heard him yell, she saw both the prosthetic foot and the normal one run towards her and the shadow of Hiccup dropping to his knees beside her before she passed out.

12. Chapter 12

Hiccup walked through the door nervously.

"How is she?" He asked Astrid who was gently wiping the bleeding gashes on the unconscious Camicazi. Astrid had been so uncertain about the girl, but when Hiccup had carried her in the previous night, unconscious and bleeding, Astrid's maternal instincts went into over-drive. Seeing the abuse that had clearly taken place made her forget her reservations.

"She's weak still, very weak. And these wounds... Did she say how she got them?"

"She said she got hit back home. There are more fresh ones though."

"Any sign of Dagur attacking?"

"Nothing, everyone is on edge, watching everywhere. We're taking no chances. There's something not quite right about it, he's here but not attacking, staying in a secluded bay but he's making no signs of aggression aside from actually coming here with his armada." Hiccup said dropping his shield down and crouching down to look at Camicazi's pale face. "It's unsettling, I don't know what he's playing at." He brushed her blonde hair out of her face and sighed sadly. Who would do this to her? She was only a child after all. How did she deserve this? Astrid voiced his questions.

"Who would do this to her? She's thirteen years old. It's horrible. Finn is only a little older than she is." Astrid wiped another trickle of blood from Camicazi's back.

"Has she woken up at all yet?" He asked keeping one hand on her face.

"Not really, but she's shown signs of life. She screamed a couple of times. And then she cried out a few things too." Astrid gave Hiccup a sideways glance as she said this.

"What did she say?"

"Well, at one point she sounded a lot like you... She cried out 'No, don't hurt him, please don't hurt him.' Then she cried out 'Be mad at me, just don't hurt Sparky' Do you know who Sparky is?"

"He's her dragon. She mentioned him yesterday, though I don't think she meant to reveal so much to me. She seemed to love him a lot."

"I would have to agree going by her desperate cries for him."

"What else did she cry out? You said a few things." Astrid looked away and took the water to pour it away. She didn't answer immediately; she poured fresh water into a pot and laid it over the fire that Stormfly had lit. Once steam began rising from the water she poured it into the dish and returned to tend Camicazi.

"Well... She was close to consciousness I think at this point, but she didn't know I was here. She seemed to be struggling with some internal battle."

"What makes you say that?"

"What she said. 'I must not fail. I can't. I can't lose him. But I can't do it. But I must. If I don't... I can't. But I will. I have to... I have to...'" Hiccup looked from his wife to the small girl lying before him. Something was troubling her; she had a task, evidently something she did not want to do. But something was making her. Did this have anything to do with her fresh wounds?

"What could she have been talking about?"

"You." Hiccup looked up; this was a bit melodramatic and dark even for Astrid.

"What? Come on Astrid." But she shook her head at him and pointed at another scar Hiccup had not seen before she spoke.

"That there is a lightning scar, like what you have."

"So what? That doesn't prove a thing."

"She said it herself. She said your name." Hiccup stared between them both.

"What?"

"She said your name."

"Did she say anything else with it?"

"No. It wasn't long after she stopped arguing with herself, she just said 'Hiccup'."

Hiccup watched Astrid for a sign that she was still holding back something but got nothing except the feeling her suspicions were rising again.

"Ok out with it Astrid. What are you thinking?"

"I just think it's an odd coincidence. She turns up here randomly, beaten which is awful, but she turns up inexplicably and then Dagur turns up but isn't attacking. You tell me what I'm thinking."

"You think she's been sent here by Dagur?"

"Either that or she ran away and he's come to find her but if that was the case I think he'd have stormed the island to get her back by now."

Hiccup stared at the unconscious child and tried to decide what was best to do. To think as a Chief, not with the sentimental side of his brain.

13. Chapter 13

Camicazi blinked and saw a fire blazing brightly in front of her, its brilliant bright flames hurt her eyes so she rolled onto her back so she wouldn't have to look at it. Only then did she remember the fresh wounds on her back which began to scream in protest as she lay on her back. She sat bolt upright in a bed that was not hers. Peering around her she remembered vaguely arriving at Hiccup's house on Toothless' back. Something felt wrong. Something was definitely wrong. It felt like home, waking and knowing something bad was coming. She felt ashamed of herself still. More than ever she knew she had to end this, to kill Hiccup before her father killed Sparky. Groaning at the pain on her back she heaved herself to her feet. Each fresh wound would be a badge of honour to her, a mark of what she was fighting to save, and a sign of everything she was sacrificing for it. She may not entirely want to kill Hiccup any longer, but she would do it for

Sparky... And then she would truly get her revenge. Revenge on the person who took everything from her, who lied to her, who marked her with every scar. Each scar seemed to burn suddenly with fresh hatred she never knew she felt. Each scar was burning, reminding her of the man who ordered each one to be created, the man who caused her so much suffering. For the first time in her life, she didn't want his approval... she wanted his blood. He might finally be proud of her, a ruthless streak was being born and she was desperate to spill his blood and watch him die slowly. Something he had always done to others and believed she'd be too weak to do. She would do it. And she'd watch him bleed out. She'd sit there as he bled out and ask if he was proud. Ask if he still thought she couldn't do it. She'd kill Hiccup to save her dragon. She'd kill her father for revenge.

Hiccup sat in the cove with Toothless. He was trying hard to think like a chief but he just couldn't do it. The father in him wouldn't allow it. He'd been a child once, he had a son now, and he had lost a daughter. Camicazi, whatever else she may turn out to be, was a child, someone's daughter. He knew, as a parent, that no child should have to suffer as she had at the hands of her adoptive father, no child should live as she had. If it was the case that Dagur was her leader and had sent her here, it made it worse. What terrible things have to happen to a child to make a thirteen year old girl willingly become an assassin to kill a man she does not know? What sick human would do something like that? Was Dagur really that vile? How could anyone push a child to become a killer? Hiccup wanted so badly to find proof that she really had simply run away, that she was no threat to him or the tribe. If he could find that proof, she would not have to suffer anymore. But so far he could find no proof, and Dagur's ships were still close by, lurking just far enough away not to pose a threat. In Hiccup's mind though, Dagur was always a threat, no matter how far away he was.

Hiccup was no killer; he was not a cruel man. Even in the heat of battle he would avoid killing at all costs, even if it was Dagur, Hiccup would avoid killing him at all costs. It was not his nature to cause harm to another being. It was why he could not have Camicazi killed if she was a threat, and why he was reluctant to consider exile if she was. Exile was as bad of a sentence as death. The archipelago was a dangerous place; there were thousands of dangers out there, especially for a young girl. She would likely not last a month out there alone. He sighed deeply, enjoying the peace and solitude of the cove. Toothless was splashing in the lake, chasing fish. For a moment he could forget he was a chief, a father, a husband and just be Hiccup, a dragon rider watching his best friend play.

"I thought I'd find you here." Came Astrid's voice from somewhere behind him. Hiccup groaned as her voice brought him back to reality. He loved her, but her being here reminded him of his responsibilities, to her, to his family, his tribe. "You always did come here to get away from the stress of everything. I figured you'd come here again now." She slipped down from Stormfly and sat beside him as Stormfly went to join Toothless.

"And you're here to remind me of my responsibilities back in the village."

"No," Astrid said softly slipping her fingers between his and watching the dragons play, as if they were teenagers again "I came

here to remind you of you. To make sure that Hiccup is still thinking over the chief, over the father." Hiccup turned to look into her startling blue eyes with his green ones, and truly for a moment he could have sworn he was looking at Astrid nearly fifteen years back when they were young and free of responsibility and just taking their relationship through its paces, learning more about one another and themselves.

"What do you mean? I have to think as a chief, I am the chief, and I'm a father now too so I have to think like that too."

"True, but chief's make mistakes. And so do fathers. What was it you once said? 'Great leaders are also often proven wrong'. You and I both know that your father made mistakes as a chief, and he made mistakes as a father. It's natural. My chief has let me down before. My own father let me down. Hiccup? Hiccup never has. Chief Hiccup has let me down, even the father Hiccup has, and I hate to say that but Mother Astrid messed up too. But Hiccup, Hiccup has never let me down. The Hiccup I fell in love with, the one who showed me dragons, the one I married, he has never let me down before and I don't expect him to start now." She smiled at him and he felt as though he was twenty years ago himself. Just sitting with Astrid and enjoying life, some aspects more than others. "As long as it's Hiccup thinking now, Hiccup making the decisions, then I know he'll make the right ones. He always does." She kissed him softly on the lips, her hand at the back of his head now, her fingers in his hair.

"Astrid, thank you." He whispered into her breath, he felt her smile as her lips pressed against his once more. Every time, every time she kissed him Hiccup felt like he was a teenager again. He couldn't help it; it was how she made him feel. He turned and held her tightly in his arms, his hand slipping into her hair, his fingers pulling it out of her neat braid. She pulled away from him briefly, and grinning like she had all those years ago she whispered "You know what happens every time you do that." Right then, Hiccup didn't especially care. He knew full well what was likely to follow, he didn't mind in the slightest. But he slipped his finger from her hair and moved his hand from her shirt and grinned back.

"I guess we're not fifteen years ago anymore." He said turning to look back at the dragons wishing he could go back in time to when they first lay here together. Of course nine months after that Finn had turned up but still. He loved her, and he loved his son. Hiccup thought about what he would have decided fifteen years ago. Back when he was new to being a chief. He'd have tried to help the girl back then, to find out more before he passed judgement. But after all that had happened in the years since, after things that had happened before like Heather, Hiccup had become cautious.

"You'll make the right decision Hiccup. I have faith in that." She rested her head on his shoulder, fingers entwining with his once more and they watched the dragons play, wishing they too could simply forget everything and play like children.

14. Chapter 14

Savage stared towards Berk. Camicazi was over there. He was frightened for her. Savage was not usually one to be so soft hearted, but he cared for the girl. She was tough, she was fierce and strong.

But she was funny and kind. He could remember her in the little childhood she had. Bringing Terrible Terrors back from the wild, running around playing dragons... alone. She'd been full of joy and laughter when she was younger, she'd played warriors too, but dragons were always her favourites. She used to tell stories to them, Savage had seen her do it, she used to tell them jokes and she'd sing to them. Sometimes she sang strange words but the dragons had adored it. Savage had enjoyed watching it, the innocence of childhood was something he had long since forgotten, that was until Tallulah had rescued her. This child had been born innocent of hate and loathing. She had fight and fire in her blood, but she was born with imagination and hope within her too. The older she grew, the more Savage had begun to see her true family heritage bloom within her. It blossomed like a rare flower and never ceased. But Dagur and his ilk were like a poison or weed slowly choking it. By the time she was eleven, the innocence and joy and laughter had all but gone from her. She became less than what she had been born for. She became cold, and filled with hate and lust for revenge. The warrior within her began to overrule the affectionate and playful side. Brilliant warrior though she was, Savage missed the girl who laughed and sang, who told stories and dreamed of a place where dragons lived in harmony with people. That side of her remained only through the dragon. She loved that dragon more than anything, but her love for it became her weakness. She would willingly throw herself in front of it to save it from pain, and Dagur knew she would do anything to protect it. Savage knew, and Dagur knew where Camicazi had really come from. And as time had gone by, they had come to realise who her parents had to be. It was undeniable, she couldn't even remember them, she'd been no more than a couple of weeks old when she'd been lost to them, and yet still, somehow, she was so like them. Savage found it so peculiar, he remembered her parents, her real parents, when they were only a few years older than she was, and he had not especially cared for them. But the more he saw them in her, the stronger his affection grew. He loved the girl for her, but seeing her defying everything to be who she was truly, even if that meant displaying everything Dagur hated, made him feel proud of her. He'd always cared a little for her, but it was Tallulah that sealed his fate.

He had loved her. She had loved him too once. But she had been married off to Dagur with no choice. She remained with him for the love of her baby boy, and Savage remained loyal to Dagur for the love of Tallulah. Dagur had never known how he had once felt, how he still felt for her. Tallulah had therefore seized the opportunity to anger Dagur, the man who took away her choice, the man who represented everything she hated, by taking in a child who was sure to represent the same to him. She had not been wrong. The baby she had said was a gift from the Gods. A blessing and she had believed that until her dying day. She said the child would be Dagur's undoing. She had planned to reunite the baby with her real family one day, when the child was ready. She had never gotten the chance. Not long before she had died she had begged Savage to protect the child if anything should happen to her, to teach her and help her as he always had on her wishes. He had sworn he always would, and he had promised one day to tell her the truth. He had never had the chance. Dagur had polluted her ideas and her mind. But as Dagur pushed her closer to committing murder, Savage knew he should not have waited so long, for it may soon be too late to tell her and she would spend the rest of her life torturing herself knowing she destroyed her true family.

15. Chapter 15

It had to be quick, it had to be neat. She'd not make him suffer as her father would. The dagger she feared would be too slow but what other choice did she have? She couldn't very well hide a sword in her boot. Let alone a hammer or axe. Quietly she slide blade wrapped in cloth into her boot and tried to act as though nothing had happened as she heard voices approaching from outside. She quickly lay back on the bed, taking care to lie on her side to prevent the gouges on her back from making her yelp in pain.

"We'll move her but I'm making no firm decision until I know a little more. We'll try talking to her, maybe she'll tell us the truth and we won't have to go to that extreme. For now I reserve judgement." She heard Hiccup say as the door opened. She snapped her eyes shut and tried to make it seem as though she had been unconscious the whole time.

"Camicazi? Are you awake?" Hiccup's voice echoed down to her, soothing, gentle. It was horrible. She wanted to stay there with her eyes closed forever when he spoke like that. She didn't want to kill him, she wanted to cry and tell him everything and have him hold her tight and rock her back and forth, stroking her hair and telling her it was all going to be ok, that he'd protect her now and save Sparky. But she had long since learnt that dreams and wishes like that were useless. No one had ever said anything like that to her; no one had ever just held her whilst she cried. With another jolt of self-loathing and childish fear she remembered Hiccup had. Not that long ago he had simply held her whilst she cried, and he must have helped nurse her back to health after Toothless brought her here for she had been so weak that she had passed out, she was here now though and could feel the bandages wrapped tightly around her torso to cover her wounds. She squeezed her eyes tighter shut as if it would help her escape from the reality of what she had to do.

"You're ok Camicazi, no one here is going to hurt you, you can open your eyes." He said gently stroking her hair. She held back the sentimental tears that longed to pour from her eyes and restrained her arms from wrapping themselves around him and hugging him. She slowly opened her eyes and looked up at his smiling face. "Hey, see I told you you could open your eyes." She said nothing and just stared at him, an internal battle taking place inside her brain. Kill the man who showed her kindness for the man who showed her none, or let the man who cared live and sacrifice the only thing that had ever loved her?

"Camicazi, I'm really sorry but we have to move you to the cells." She shook herself away from her internal struggle and stared at him, now he sounded like her father, except for the apology at the beginning. "We don't know much about you, and enemy ships are anchored close by so we need to keep you somewhere secure until we're sure you're not a threat. I can't risk my family or my people. I am sorry though. We'll try to keep you comfortable." He really did seem sorry but she realised in that moment, they knew. They knew her father was here; maybe... just maybe she could turn this around. Maybe she really could tell them the truth, save Sparky and not have to kill Hiccup. Maybe... But deep down she knew better. Only weaklings look for a way to escape what is difficult. She could not risk her dragon. She knew that much. Hiccup was nothing to her, he

may have shown her kindness, but he was still responsible for her mother's death. Sparky though, he was her family.

She allowed herself to be led down to a cell, to be locked in. It had happened before, usually in far worse circumstances, with far more beating on the way down. This was practically being taken to a luxury hut for a holiday.

"Camicazi, I need you to be honest with me now. I need you to tell me the truth about where you've come from and why you're here." Hiccup said through the bars, he almost seemed to be pleading with her. She could not lie to him, something in those eyes forced her not to, but she could not tell him the truth either. She bit her tongue and held her silence.

"Camicazi please... If you truly are a runaway looking for somewhere safe, then we can let you go, you can live here. If there is more to you than that, if you are lying..." He left off. He knew something. She knew he did. And that scared her. "If you are lying, and I'm afraid we have reason to believe you are, I'll have to exile you. I am reserving judgement for now. But I need answers. I have an armada waiting out there to strike, if you're a threat I need you gone."

"I am Camicazi." She said simply. He looked at her puzzled. She held her breath. This was it, time to choose, one way or another. "I was raised by Dagur the Deranged's wife Tallulah. After she was killed I had nothing. When I turned ten my father, Dagur, told me who was responsible for her death. He told me how vile those people were to dragons. I wanted revenge." Hiccup stared. She'd told him this before but had not mentioned who had raised her. "I came here to avenge my adoptive mother. I came here to kill you." She said it calmly and finally. She even pulled the dagger from her boot and shoved it through the bars. Hiccup stared at her horrified.

"What I saw when I got here, it wasn't like I'd been told. I began to doubt everything my father told me. I flew back to confront him. He chained my dragon and tried to hurt him to punish me. That's how I got my fresh wounds. I stood in front, as I always have. He sent my brother to take me back here, to finish the job, or else he'll kill my dragon. And I know he will. So when I woke up earlier, I knew I had to end this. To kill you so he can't kill Sparky. But more than that, I realised who I really want revenge on. I will kill my father. I will do as he does to others, as he'd have me do to you. I will do it slowly and cruelly and just watch him die. Maybe he'll finally realise I wasn't so weak, maybe he'll finally be proud. But I won't let him hurt my dragon. I don't care what it costs." She did not shy away, she did not look angry or scared, and she did not look upset or pleased. She just spoke with a certainty of fact. He knew what she said was true. He saw it in her eyes, heard it in her voice. He hated that she spoke the truth because it left him with only one choice, and knowing why she had risked it all made it all that much harder to say the word.

"Exile"

16. Chapter 16

The day turned into night, Camicazi only knew this because it got a little darker inside her cell and the guards outside it switched. She

fought against herself as she had all day. She was not afraid of anything, she would not be scared, and she would not feel sad and cry. But that one word... Exile. That word was enough to make a grown man plead for any other fate. Exile was perhaps the worst fate that anyone could be given. A grown Viking was likely to die if he was exiled from his tribe, the archipelago was treacherous and a lone Viking stood little chance of survival. Let alone a thirteen year old girl. She'd likely either die within a month or be captured and made a slave, and the latter was the worse of the two options. If she'd had Sparky, she might not have minded, she could have survived if she had him. But she would not. He would surely be killed, and she would die out there in exile. Maybe she'd get to see him soon then, in Valhalla.

She bit back tears again. She hated crying, it made her remember that she was a child, a helpless child. And Camicazi hated feeling helpless. She would not cry. She would not beg Hiccup to change his mind. She'd just let it happen. The bitter fact was exile might give her a chance to delay her inevitable death for a short while. When she gave no signal that Hiccup was dead, her father would know she had failed and attack anyway. Someone would then come here to the cells and find her, and she'd be killed for her failure. She found herself hoping she'd be exiled sooner rather than later. She would not die by her father's hand. If by some miracle she survived exile, she'd return and kill her father one day. But first she had to live.

She felt scared as the dark seeped into her cell, she was not afraid of the dark, but she knew what dawn would bring. If the dark was here, the light would be here soon too. And when the light came, she'd be exiled. She hated herself all the more for her fear, for her childish hope of a saviour. She hated herself most though, for daring in those darkened hours before the dawn, to dream that things were different. That she had a family who loved her; she pictured her father as Hiccup, for he was the only man who had showed her what a father's love looked like. She saw herself training and fighting with Finn and the others, laughing with Buffnut, another female, she saw herself riding Sparky over the island, laughing as smiling as Toothless flew beside her. She let these foolish dreams comfort her through the dark, if the Gods had only been kinder, maybe it would all have been real, but with her own family, her real family and her true tribe. If only. In another time, maybe she'd have had a chance, a chance to really live and love.

17. Chapter 17

Toothless let out a solemn rumble as Hiccup paced the floor for the thousandth time. He had been tense for hours now. Toothless knew why, the girl. Hiccup had sentenced her to be exiled. Toothless knew this was an awful fate and that Hiccup would not be happy with his choice, but Hiccup could not have sentenced her to death or allowed her to stay either. Toothless might have wondered why Hiccup simply didn't send her back to the place she'd come from, if he hadn't seen the scars on her back, if he hadn't known who they'd be sending her back to.

In the end, exile had been the kindest option. Sending her away might give her a chance, however small, to escape the abusive life she had led so far. But she was only a child. She would not last long out

there, Toothless knew it and so did Hiccup. She might be strong, she might be a fighter, but underneath it all, she was a scared child who had nothing. No one to love her, no one to care if she died. No one to protect her from the suffering she had endured. No one to tell Hiccup to stop, to let her go. No one willing to die to save her. Toothless knew what it felt like to be loved that much, and to love someone that much in return. Hiccup would die for him, and he would die for Hiccup. They would both willingly die to protect those they loved, like Astrid, Finn, Stormfly... Toothless thought it was a terrible thing that Camicazi did not know what it was to be loved that much. But it seemed, as he watched Hiccup mumble to himself, hammering molten metal into new shapes in the forge in his frustration, that she knew what it was to love something so much you would die for it. And Toothless knew that it was this fact, as much as any other, that was causing Hiccup to struggle with his choice so much. She had been willing to be hit, abused, to kill or be killed to protect a dragon. All for the love of a dragon. She loved it more than anything, that much was clear, Toothless knew Hiccup could relate to this, and he had watched the last few hours as Hiccup argued with himself about his choice of banishment. Knowing he was sentencing not only Camicazi to her likely death, but also the dragon she was dying, quite literally, to save. Toothless began to pace himself. Hiccup was very distracted and so Toothless wandered down to the cells. He just wanted to see her, to check if she was ok. Threat to his family or not, there was something in her he knew innately. All the older dragons here knew it. Stormfly, Sharpshot and Stealth, Thornado and Cloudjumper... Even Hookfang, Barf and Belch and Meatlug knew it. All day they had been sneaking down to the cells to peek at her, to see if she was alright. Hookfang had been able to watch her most as his human Snotlout was guarding her for large parts of the day. Toothless slipped in under the darkness and let out a very low rumble from the pit of his stomach, one the dragons often used to call to their young. Stormfly responded and slipped out from the hiding spot and greeted him affectionately. She gave a small rumble of sadness; the girl was struggling though she refused to show it. She was unhappy and scared. Toothless nuzzled Stormfly's head and slipped into the space she had vacated to watch over her for a while. Stormfly flew off to find her human.

Sure enough, there was Camicazi; she sat huddled against the wall, clutching her knees. The guards were not paying her any attention; they stood together laughing and talking. Toothless settled himself down more comfortably to watch her when his ears pricked up. He could hear something, something other than the guards. He turned and looked at Camicazi again, she was singing to herself.

"Don't be afraid little child of mine,
Everything is going to be alright,
I stand here beside you and here I'll stay,
To keep the darkness all at bay,
Don't cry little child tonight,
I will always be here by your side,
I won't let them hurt you; you know it's true,

I will protect you from all they do,
Don't be afraid little child of mine,
I'll be here to save you from the fight,
I'll use my fire they'll hear me roar,
They will not hurt you anymore,
And if they take me away my dear,
Remember I'll always be right here,
Don't cry for me little child of mine,
I will never leave your little side,
Just be strong my child,
Don't be afraid,
I will be back again someday,
Fly on the wind and fly away,
I will be with you all the way,
Don't be afraid and don't you cry,

I promise to never leave your side." She whispered to herself through silent tears, she kept her head low staring down at her knees. Toothless felt his heart strings pull. That was a Dragon lullaby. He had heard it when he was a tiny baby in the nest, he and Stormfly sang it to her hatchlings every year. No human, not even Dragon Whisperer's like Hiccup knew that song. They knew dragonsong, but not the lullaby. The only way she could know that... was if a dragon had sung it her. Toothless watched in pain as she sang it over and over again to herself, as if trying to take comfort from it. When she finally fell silent and her hushed sobs were all he could hear, Toothless sang it himself. He let it rumble out of his throat and he sang to her. Her head rose slightly and she gasped as she heard it. He did not show himself, but he knew that she knew he was there now. Hookfang joined him from outside the cell where he was guarding, and slowly, the dragons all over Berk began to sing it. Some for the first time, like the young dragons that belonged to Finn and his friends. They had only ever been sung it, they had never sung the words themselves. But just as all the dragons had gathered around her when she sang dragonsong when she first arrived, they all joined together to sing the lullaby to her, from wherever they were. The night air carried the hauntingly beautiful lullaby of the dragons and every human around could feel it, a chill down their spine but a warmth in their heart. The song was carried out to the Berserker ships anchored off shore and even they felt it go through them, but it made most of them feel fearful. But somewhere on that ship was a dragon, and he heard the song and sang it back, hoping in vain that it would make it back to Berk, and back to his human who he felt sure had started the dragons singing at last.

Toothless could hear the song echoing all around the island, each

dragon singing it to another, to the sky. He could hear a dragon further away, off shore somewhere singing it too. He wondered if this was Camicazi's dragon. Was it there on the ships? He turned back to Camicazi and heard her add her own lines to the lullaby.

"I'm sorry my Sparky that I failed you,
I tried so hard to fight you know it's true,
In my dreams we'll fly for ever more,
Across a great blue sky we would soar,
Sparky my darling I'm so sorry,
That such dreams will never be,
I know in life I won't see you again,
Maybe I'll see you when we're dead,
I pray to the Gods to free you now,
I hope you survive and flee to the clouds,
I'm sorry I failed you
This is true,

Just know that I will always love you..." She choked on her words and cried more into her arms. Toothless could take it no more. He fled from where he hid and saw all the dragons in the close area do the same. None of them could bear to stay there and hear her tragic song. It hurt Toothless' heart to hear it, she so desperately wanted to save that dragon, she didn't even care that she was going to die. Just that he survived. Toothless flew straight back to Hiccup's side, rumbling a saddened sound that Hiccup knew and pressing his head close to Hiccup, needing to feel his affection, needing to be held.

"What's the matter bud? You ok?" Hiccup said holding Toothless and stroking his head. Toothless rumbled distressed but calmed in Hiccup's arms. All around Berk other dragon's were doing the same, her song had carried as theirs had, as the dragonsong had. Stormfly stopped hunting fish and flew to Astrid's side, nuzzling her and making the same distressed sound the wild dragons around them were making. Hookfang flew to Snotlout, Barf and Belch tried to pull themselves apart to reach the twins and instead made a racket until they came to them. Stealth flew from the Haddock house to Astrid whilst Sharpshot soared up Hiccup's shirt. Cloudjumper began crying distressed and stayed close to Valka, Thornado let out a booming cry and sought out Stoick. Every dragon, Finn's included sought comfort beside their human as the words of Camicazi echoed in their heads. But Sparky struggled and struggled against his harness but could not get free. Could not reach Camicazi and so she stayed alone in her cell, crying quiet tears that silently screamed. But it seemed only the dragons could hear the silent screaming. The night was long and torturous as each dragon tried unsuccessfully not to hear her cries.

18. Chapter 18

Dawn rose, the sky was stained with blood red, reflecting the impending battle that was waiting to unfold on the island of Berk. All across the island, exhausted Vikings were leaving their homes having spent most of the night awake with their dragons who had seemed oddly distressed all night. Hiccup was stirring having finally managed to sleep only when he left his bed and slept on the floor leaning against Toothless.

"Hiccup... We have a few problems." Snotlout said as he slammed the door open. Hiccup groaned and Astrid threw an axe at him from where she was sleeping. She'd been up all night with Stormfly. Hiccup couldn't understand where this sudden distress had come from.

"What is it Snotlout, we're exhausted, we've been up with distressed dragons all night."

"Yeah the whole village has, that's one of the problems. The second problem is Camicazi..."

"Why what's wrong with her?"

"She's been trying all night to get hold of a weapon."

"To escape?"

"No... she kept screaming and pleading with people to kill her..." Hiccup felt a sudden wave of horror, she was afraid of exile. "She kept saying, 'He's going to kill me anyway. Please don't give him the chance.'"

"I wouldn't kill her..."

"She didn't say you would. She said her father would come. She said 'he'll attack, he'll kill anyone and everyone in his way, he'll kill Hiccup and he'll kill me'. That's where the third thing comes into it. She's right. Dagur's ships came ashore, he's preparing his armada to fight."

"Why did you not lead with that?! There's a chance he's come for her. Astrid, get up, you and Snotlout get our warriors ready for the Berserkers. I want Finn and the other children shut safely in the academy. Toothless, guard them bud, and no matter what happens do not let any harm come to them or let them go."

"And what stupid thing that's going to get you killed have you got planned for yourself?" Astrid snapped climbing out of bed and stretching her back as she pulled her weapons down. Snotlout snickered until Hiccup and Astrid both shot him a glare.

"I'm going to speak to Dagur. If he wants Camicazi, we'll negotiate." Astrid dropped her axe on the floor and stared at him.

"Not only is that plan going to get you killed but you and I both know you cannot hand her back to Dagur. You saw what he did to her; you can't send her back to that."

"Did I say I would? I said we'd negotiate. It's more or less buying

time. Get everyone ready, I get the feeling the war is about to carry on where it left off..." Hiccup said pulling on his armour as Toothless herded Finn and his dragon out of the door.

Camicazi hit the floor with her fists again, though she knew it was no good. Tears were pouring down her cheeks, these were angry and pained tears rather than sad or frightened. She had cried those in the dark of night. She knew her father was bringing the ships in, she knew that the soldiers were creeping up through Berk whilst he waited for Hiccup. It was always the plan. How could she have been so stupid as to not have seen it? The soldiers creeping in had been the plan even if she killed Hiccup. She hit the floor again. She'd known they were coming when she felt that familiar twinge within her, like a storm was coming. She knew Sparky was closer to her now. It was this knowledge that caused her to fight so hard against the solid rock of her cell. She wanted to see him one more time, to cut him free if she could before she was killed. The guard outside her cell was sat very relaxed as the sun began to peak through the dark spilling into the entrance of the cells.

She heard a clank and thump, a familiar dragging of feet outside her cell.

"They're here..." she breathed. "Guard! Please, the Berserkers are outside, they are attacking! You have to alert the chief! You have to tell Hiccup the soldiers are already here, sneaking into the village. My father will be waiting for him on the beach. You have to warn him!"

The guard simply laughed at her and went back to his woodwork. She yelled, she screamed and shouted but it was no good. They would never listen to her. The sun had fully risen casting its early morning glow all over Berk before the guard finally left to defend the village. Snotlout had come in to say they were preparing for battle. She had tried to tell him what she knew but he had ignored her. Everyone had, they always ignored her. No one had ever listened, had she really expected anything different now?

She collapsed against the wall once again and placed her head back on the wall. She was useless. She was foolish to ever believe she was anything more. She was just a stupid, useless child, and she would die one today.

19. Chapter 19

Dagur smirked as he saw the one-legged figure of Hiccup walking towards him on the beach. She had failed; he'd always figured she'd fail. But she would still be Hiccup's undoing. He knew this much.

"Well if it isn't Hiccup. I'm a little disappointed to see you here I must confess but never mind."

"This is a new low even for you Dagur, to send your own daughter to kill me."

"You found out then? Did she cave and tell you? I always knew she was weak."

"She told me, but she isn't weak. She's currently waiting to be exiled." Hiccup informed him, waiting to see if he would try and get her released.

"Really? That's a bit cruel for you isn't it Hiccup? To exile a thirteen year old girl? Who knew you had it in you, I almost feel proud." Dagur replied with a twisted and evil smile plastered across his face.

"That's it? It doesn't bother you that she's going to be exiled? Your daughter?"

"Nope not at all. Does that appal you Hiccup?"

"Yes actually. You sent your daughter, your thirteen year old daughter to kill me and now she's going to be exiled and you're just happy to accept that? That is sick."

"Oh did I forget to mention, she isn't really my daughter? My wife found her."

"She told me that. But it's still sick Dagur, even for you. She's a child."

"Let her go free then, send her back." Dagur was grinning more. Hiccup stared at him. It was a ploy, a test.

"No. I know what you did to her, I saw the scars. I won't send her back to that."

"So you'd send her to her death? You know she'll die out there."

"She might survive. She's stronger than you think she is."

"Not without her precious dragon she won't. She'd go nowhere without him. And she knows that since she failed, he pays for it." Dagur grinned evilly again and Hiccup saw a wing and tail of a dragon and then he heard it, the terrible screeching cry, it was heart wrenching and distressing. Then, Hiccup realised why all the dragons had been so distressed last night...

"Sparky..." He breathed as he looked at the chained Skrill, whip marks down it's back and sorrow it's red-yellow eyes.

Camicazi's head snapped forwards. She knew that cry. She knew that call. Her heart split inside her chest as she listened helplessly to Sparky's desperate calls to her. She had promised she'd always come to him when he cried, and yet she wasn't there. She had let him down. She'd never be there again.

He kept screeching and crying. She hated the sound. It broke her heart. As she tried to ignore the cries she recognised something he was saying. "Hiccup." She gasped. He was down there which meant... "No!" She flung herself against the bars of her cell and let out a loud cry. Within a few seconds a Nadder flew in to the cells. She slammed her fist on the walls and then gestured from her mouth to the bars. The Nadder understood her instantly and blasted the bars with fire; they melted instantly, no match for the hottest fire in the dragon world. Charging out she thanked the dragon and gave the sign

to fly away before running as fast as her legs would carry her to the blacksmith's forge and grabbing the first sword she could find. She had made her decision. She turned and ran with the swift speed of a Night Fury towards the one thing she loved most.

"Let's end this now Dagur, like Vikings." Hiccup said drawing his sword.

"Gladly" Dagur grinned maliciously drawing his own sword and bringing it down towards Hiccup with such force that Hiccup's sword was knocked from his hands. He had no dragon to light his flame sword, he dodged Dagur's next blow but Dagur was a swift fighter and Hiccup stumbled and turned around just fast enough to see Dagur grin as he brought the sword down hard over Hiccup's head...

"NO!" A voice yelled and as Hiccup heard metal hit metal his world went dark.

20. Chapter 20

****Sorry it's such a long bit!****

"Eurgh!" The girl groaned with the effort of keeping Dagur's sword from cutting Hiccup's skull in half.

"Well this truly is disappointing. Not only do you fail to kill him but now you're protecting him!" Dagur snapped with the edge of a maniacal laugh. She pushed with all her weight, forcing him to bring the sword back and away from Hiccup. She raised her sword ready to parry his blow again. He just laughed.

"You are even weaker than I first thought. Let's see were your foolish daring gets you when you are faced with real opponents." He laughed and sat calmly to watch as his soldiers circled her, a group of eight or nine of them began attacking her. Her gaze darkened and she swung the sword with all her might, disarming and wounding anyone who came close to her. She took axes and threw them, she stabbed and slashed. She would show him who was weak. She fought each of them, leaving an increasing count of bodies, both unconscious and dead, her arms stained with red blood spray. She saw Hiccup staring horrified but she had no time to pay much attention to him as she fought the last soldier. Then Vott stepped forward to battle her.

"You know I can defeat you easily!" She yelled at him

"We'll just see about that sister!"

"I am not your sister, as you so loved to remind me every day of our lives!" She swung the sword at him and he deflected it, with some difficulty. "Once I called you my brother, there was a time when making you laugh was all I ever wanted, to see father proud. Even now I wish it didn't have to be so. Why must you call me to bring down another blow upon you? Just let my dragon, let these people go!"

"You who I called sister, how could you have come to hate us so? Is this really what you want? Let my heart be hardened truly then, this is how it shall go. I care not how high the cost may grow. I will carry on father's legacy. I won't let them go!" Hiccup watched with

horror in his eyes as she fought the boy she had once counted as her brother. Finally she made a gash on his arm and kicked him to the floor, kicking in his helmet and knocking him unconscious.

"Now what 'father'?! What else are you going to throw at me?" She yelled, there was nothing but fury and hate in her voice. No child should speak that way.

"Now I will end this."

"By what killing my dragon?!"

"That will come in time. First I am going to kill you. Disappointing, I had other plans but you leave me no choice." He spat and he jumped down, sword drawn to fight her.

"Bring it on." She hissed darkly as he charged her.

"No! Hiccup cried out but he could not move to where she now stood, on the boats deck, fast enough. She leaped and dodged half of his lunges, she parried the others. She attacked with force that surprised Dagur. The trouble was, she was unleashing thirteen years worth of hate now. Dagur hit the side of the boat and paused to catch his breath; she skidded to a halt beside her dragon. The Skrill called out with a sad rumble. She saw for the first time the whip marks on his back, she gently touched them, they were fresh, he'd been hit whilst she had been away, unconscious on Berk. Suddenly every cruel scar on her back tingled with rage, every memory of abuse and hate came surging towards her, and every tear she had ever shed burned within her like a fire that was out of control. There was nothing left now but hate. Hate for Dagur.

Screaming a terrible scream she ran at him, sword held high. For the next five minutes Hiccup watched the most intense battle he had ever seen, and he'd been with Astrid since childhood. Camicazi was striking Dagur with renewed strength and courage. There was no reluctance, no fear, no compassion and no mercy behind her attacks. She hit him with everything she had, thirteen years of abuse and hate. Dagur seemed to have realised this as his eyes were genuinely afraid now. She turned and grabbed another sword from the deck, it didn't look quite normal to Hiccup, she placed the metal tip by the Skrill. Hiccup tried to yell a warning but she yelled a command to the dragon instead.

"Light it up boy!" The dragon obeyed and the blade sparkled with the power of Skrill lightning which she thrust at Dagur, the lightning struck him and he collapsed in a heap on the ground, his sword falling out of reach. She leapt onto him and held the sword above her head ready to deliver the fatal blow. He was at her mercy now.

"Do you still think I'm weak now? Am I still useless?" She spat. He smirked at her.

"Kill me then. Prove you're not weak."

"Camicazi no!" Hiccup yelled out, she froze for a split second, she had forgotten he was there. "You don't have to kill him Camicazi! You'd be stooping to his level if you do. Don't be like him. Don't become the empty crazed killer he is. That's not you." She hesitated, her arms jerking slightly.

"I knew it. Too weak to kill me." Dagur sneered. She held firm, she'd kill him. "Coward!" He taunted.

"It takes more courage not to kill him Camicazi, to walk away." Hiccup was trying to think fast. He looked at the chained Skrill and saw a saddle strapped to his back and was hit with sudden inspiration. "Camicazi! Did brave men kill dragons?" She paused again. "Did the brave men kill dragons Camicazi?" Hiccup yelled across at her.

"No..."

"What did the brave men do?"

"The brave men rode them." She glanced across to Sparky; she saw the saddle she had made for him still on his back.

"Are you one of those brave people?"

"Yes..." She lowered the sword slowly

"Coward!"

"I am not a coward!"

"Then kill me! Kill me and save your dragon, end your suffering and his." He had a point, she raised the sword again.

"Camicazi don't! You don't have to do this!"

"Do it!"

"Don't!"

"Do it!"

"Don't!"

"Now!"

"Nooo!" Hiccup yelled as Camicazi suddenly swung the sword down screaming in frustration. Camicazi leaned on her sword breathing deeply. Hiccup realised to his relief that she had only hit his helmet with the flat side of the blade, knocking him out. He pulled himself to his feet when Camicazi gave a yelp of pain and Hiccup saw Vott, dagger in hand standing behind her. She turned sharply and hit him in the face, twisted his arm and shoved him to the floor with his father, once again knocking him out. Hiccup ran towards her and saw to his horror her hand move from her side, covered in scarlet blood which was pouring out of a gash in her side.

"Uh oh." She said, and promptly passed out.

"No!" Hiccup yelled as she fell, and other voices screamed at the same time.

"Hiccup!"

"Camicazi no!" Camicazi hit the deck, her eyes closed and blood

pouring from her side as Sparky screeched.

21. Chapter 21

Hiccup charged forwards as fast as he could to her side. The Skrill was pulling frantically and desperately against his restraints... It reminded Hiccup of Toothless all those years ago. Hiccup was almost at Camicazi's side when the dragon finally pulled himself free enough to stand over her body in a defensive manner. Now Hiccup felt stuck. This dragon was one he'd never managed to get close to, especially having a metal leg. But he had to get to Camicazi; she'd die if he didn't. He walked slowly towards the dragon. He growled and sparked, he wouldn't let Hiccup near to her. Hiccup could understand even if he didn't like it. Sparky was just protecting her, he didn't want to risk anymore harm coming to her, Sparky probably didn't know if he could trust anyone and so wouldn't let Hiccup near to the only person he did trust.

"Hi Sparky right?" Hiccup said gently as he kept walking slowly, trying to remember what Camicazi had said about when she first met him. She said about holding her hands out and so Hiccup placed his hands out in front of him, keeping them low so they did not seem threatening. What else had she said? He knew she had done something unusual but what was it? The dragon kept growling.

"Sparky, I want to help her. Not hurt. Please let me see her, she'll die Sparky. I know you don't want that. Please let me see her." The Skrill stepped back enough that Hiccup could see her but he still would not let Hiccup close enough to touch her. Hiccup might have laughed in another situation at how literally the dragon took his words, deliberately he expected, but it was too serious a situation to laugh. "Please," He pleaded "please let me help her." He tried to remember what Camicazi had told him. It was a memory just beyond his reach. Come on... he was willing himself, I have to remember. For her sake. _"__I sang. He calmed down and stopped sparking at me. He seemed pretty weak and tired. After I began singing he let me get close to him." _She had sung. Hiccup then quietly began to sing dragonsong as he had to her only a few days ago. He sang it pretty badly but he sang it nonetheless. The Skrill looked at him quizzically, he seemed to relax a little but still wouldn't let Hiccup close to Camicazi. Hiccup kept singing quietly, his voice pleading with the dragon. He sang until he ran out of song and so added his own words.

"From the depths of my heart

I beg of you

Let me save her, save both of you

Let me help, this I plead

Then you both can fly away free

Sparky, please

You know Camicazi needs me

Let me help her I beg of you..." He pleaded with the Skrill and

finally, the dragon staring fully into his eyes, stepped away to let Hiccup help.

"Camicazi... No..." Hiccup pressed his hand against the gash in her side to try and ease the blood flow. Sparky turned and pulled a shirt from one of the crates on deck. Hiccup took it gratefully and tore it, wrapping it around her. It was quickly stained red, but at least it would help ease it until he could tend her properly. He scooped her into his arms to carry her back to the safety of the village. The Skrill pulled against his chains in visible distress as Hiccup walked away.

"Shh it's ok. I have to get her away from here. I'll bring her to you as soon as she's well. I promise." He didn't have time to wait long for a response, but fortunately the dragon nuzzled the girl and Hiccup's hand, giving his blessing. Hiccup kept walking, Camicazi seemed so tiny now. It hurt Hiccup to know this was the second time in only a few short days he had carried an unconscious and injured Camicazi to the safety of his home.

"Astrid, get the dragon to the academy, and the Berserkers all to the cells."

"Hiccup, please, can I see her?" Hiccup paid attention for the first time to the other voice that had called out as she fell.

"Savage?!" He said surprised. Savage stepped forwards quickly and looked at the small child lying limp in Hiccup's arms.

"No... Camicazi... You have to be ok. You have to." He said reaching out and stroking her hair out of her face. Hiccup almost dropped her in surprise and confusion. "Hiccup, please, please help her. Please."

"Why do you care anyway?"

"Because I've been her guardian, her teacher for years. Can I ask a favour of you? Well, a couple. I know I don't deserve it but may I at least ask?" Hiccup stared stunned at Savage.

"Go on."

"Don't send her back to Dagur, keep her safe please. And when she's better, please let me say goodbye to her. That's all I ask. I beg of you." Hiccup was so shocked by this obvious care Savage was displaying that he nodded in agreement before walking up to the village carrying Camicazi's limp form in his arms, singing softly to her in the vain hope that she might hear it and come back to them.

22. Chapter 22

****Sorry it's been a while, here's the next instalment****

Hiccup sat beside her, he hadn't moved since Gothi had stitched her up. He just prayed she'd be ok. She had saved him. Astrid and the others had rounded up the last of the Berserkers and put them into the cells. Hiccup had been here for the last few hours, pacing and stressing.

"Hiccup!" Astrid burst through the door, her eyes wide and tearful.

"Are they all secured?" He said his voice hoarse.

"Yes, but Hiccup... You really need to hear what Savage has to say..."

_"__Don't go... Please don't go. I need you."_

_"__I have no choice. I can't choose whether to die or not"_

_"__Yes you can. You always have the choice."_

_"__Don't leave me. Please."_

_"__How can I decide otherwise? Who's there to care? Who would miss me if I left?"_

_"__I would, you're my human. And I am your dragon. Do not leave me. I beg of you."_

_"__I would care"_

_"__I would"_

_"__Me too"_

_"__And us."_

_"__Who is this? I have no one. Well... I have Sparky. But that's all. No one else. I have no family."_

_"__Family does not always have to be blood ties. Listen carefully child, you'll hear them asking after you. You'll know they care. You are not alone."_

_"__Don't leave me."_

_"__Don't leave us. We've been watching over you for a while Dragon-Whisperer. Do not leave now, we care, and there are others, other humans who care. Come back to us. Don't leave. Return."_

_"__Please come back. Please don't leave me."_

With a sudden sharp gasp Camicazi stirred as if coming back from the dead. Hiccup spun around sharply. His eyes were tired and there were dark circles beneath them, they looked watery and weary. He'd been there for days, only dozing off every now and then. The dragons had been there the whole time. Toothless and Stormfly taking it in turns to lay besides her, calling softly to her, but they had not been alone. Other dragons including Hookfang, Meatlug and Barf and Belch had sat outside the house for hours calling to her softly.

"You're ok." His voice was very hoarse as he spoke to her. She turned to look at him, his voice and eyes were full of relief. Before she could even try to respond he wrapped his arms around her and held her tightly. "You're ok." He said again as if to reassure himself his

words were true. He let go and brushed her blonde hair from her eyes, he was crying. Why was he crying? "You foolish girl. You foolish, foolish girl. What were you thinking? You nearly died. And then Sparky wouldn't let me near you. Thank Thor you're ok." He said smiling broadly and he held her again. Camicazi just couldn't understand.

"Were you... were you worried about me?" She stuttered. Hiccup held her at arm's length and looked at her, tears staining his face.

"Of course I was! Everyone has been so worried. It seems despite everything, you've had quite the impact young lady, and everyone has been asking how you are." He stroked her face with his thumb and smiled. "Everyone will be relieved to know you're awake."

"But... I... I don't understand..." None of this made sense, why did he care, why did anyone care? Why had he been worried? And what was the feeling inside of her as she looked at the tears on his face? The feeling she got when he hugged her like that, a warm feeling in her heart... What was it? The only thing she could relate it to, was how she felt about Sparky. But how could this be? How could they care? What was it to be cared about?

"You're safe now. And for now, that is all that matters." He whispered hugging her tightly. What was this? Was she still dreaming as she had in her cell in those dark hours? Or was this Valhalla? No if it was Valhalla Sparky would be here... Sparky, the thing she had risked it all for...

"Sparky." She croaked "What happened to Sparky? Please, please tell me you didn't hurt him, you didn't send him back there..."

"Camicazi, it's ok... Sparky is safe, he's here."

"I want to see him, I need to see him. Please... Just let me take Sparky and you'll never see me again."

"That's not going to work I'm afraid. But of course you can see Sparky, he's been quite upset. I'm afraid we had to restrain him to keep him and everyone else safe." She didn't begin to think about what he meant when he said that wouldn't work. She just wanted to see her dragon. That was all she wanted right now. Hiccup helped her stand, and she tried to walk but tripped, Toothless caught her and helped her, her side hurt so much, she felt weak. She hated feeling weak; it reminded her she was still only young, that she was only human.

"Are you ok to walk?" Hiccup asked her, concerned.

"Of course I am." She snapped, slightly more harshly than she had intended perhaps, she wasn't used to such a question being asked out of concern rather than being condescending.

"Ok, if not Toothless can carry you, don't push yourself or else the stitches will come undone..."

"STITCHES?!" She pulled frantically at her top, her side screamed in protest as her fingers grazed the wound.

"Careful! Careful!" Hiccup took her hands in his to stop her pulling the stitches. "Here, look, let me help." He pulled her top up just enough to show her the stitches, she tensed. She feared the touch of men. Back home, when a girl reached a certain age, she'd be manipulated or abused by men. Camicazi had so far avoided that but she'd seen the looks in men's eyes, in the eyes of Vott's friends as she got older. It made her sick, and fearful. She trained all the harder for it.

Hiccup noticed her flinch and tense and his gaze darkened. He knew some people would abuse young girls and women; it disgusted him, especially when he saw the damage men had already done to her.

"It's ok, I'm not going to do anything to you, trust me. I'm just showing you the stitches since you panicked about them. The wound was pretty bad and needed stitching. They're healing well; you'll have another scar though..."

"Another scar." She mumbled tracing the stitches lightly with one finger. Stitches were new; she'd never had her wounds tended properly before. Her own gaze darkened to match Hiccup's exactly as she thought about the ones responsible for each scar. She tenderly lowered her top again and held herself up as steady as she could, leaning only slightly on Toothless for support.

"I want to see Sparky now." Hiccup nodded.

"There's someone I promised I'd take you to when you woke up, we'll visit them on the way to Sparky."

23. Chapter 23

"CAMICAZI! You're ok! I've been so worried about you!" A voice yelled frantically as she entered the cell block. The speakers crashed into the bars, hands reaching through to touch her face, to make sure she was really there.

"S...Savage?" She gasped as he tried to hug her through the bars of his cell. "Wha...Why...?"

"You're ok! You're safe and that is all that matters."

"Savage, I don't understand..." She whispered, tears were burning again as he stared at her, as if seeing her for the first time. Hiccup stood back a little bit, and held up a hand to silence Snotlout before he could say anything. Savage's response to Camicazi was interesting.

"I'm just glad you're alright. You'll be safe now. I give you my word."

"Well that means nothing." She said stepping back, suddenly cold as ice. "You and I both know your word is worth less than limpets on a day when you have fish to eat." Her sudden cold attitude intrigued Hiccup, even more so when Savage sank a little and hung his head in shame beneath her glare.

"You're right. But, I mean it this time..."

"Like I'm going to believe that. You've been hiding the truth from me for years. You lied to me! And now you want me to trust your word? As if Savage." She turned to walk away.

"Ok ok, Camicazi wait! I know I've hidden things from you in the past, but never again. Never. Ask me anything and I'll tell you the truth."

"Ok. Why did you look after me after mother died? Why keep caring for me?" Savage looked uncertainly towards where Dagur was. "Why Savage?"

"Because I promised her I would always take care of you, no matter what happened to her. I'd protect you from Dagur and..."

"And what?"

"And, return you to your real family, your true tribe one day."

"Why did you promise that?"

"Because... because I loved her." Savage looked embarrassed but told her none-the-less. Hiccup stared, Savage was capable of love?

"And me? Did you ever care about me at all? Or was it always just for her? Like it was for father?"

"You grew on me, even when she was around. I do care Camicazi, of course I do. I can't have spent thirteen years watching you grow, caring for you, training you and seeing the young woman you will become and not care."

"You know who my parents, my tribe really are don't you Savage?" She'd finally reached the question she was most keen to have answered. She'd get Sparky now and leave to find them.

"I want to find my family. My real family." She turned to Hiccup. "I have to find them; maybe someday I'll come back and visit. But I have to find my family. To know who I really am. I'm taking Sparky and leaving by nightfall. That's my final decision." Hiccup said nothing. Savage looked hard at her, then glanced back to Hiccup who nodded very very slightly.

"Savage? You know, I know you do."

"Y...yes I do know."

"Tell me then... please."

"Well, your mother, your real mother... she's a born fighter, like you. Very beautiful. Very strong. And your father, he's... he's very like you in so many ways. Bright green eyes, he loves dragons as much as you. He would willingly, and has willingly thrown himself into a dangerous path to protect his own dragon, a dragon as unusual and powerful as your own. He's a great leader and a dragon trainer..." He watched her carefully, she felt something dawning on her, like the first warm day after a frozen winter. Savage watched her expression and glanced back at Hiccup again. "You have an older brother as well. I don't know much about him. He was only an infant when you disappeared. Carried from your burning home by a small green Terrible

Terror called Sharpshot... Your father tried to find you, but you were gone. I see your parents so much in you... the warrior and the dragon trainer..." He stared at Hiccup now and she turned around, her eyes glassy and looked at him. His own eyes were watering as he looked at her. She saw now his eyes were not just green, they were precisely the same shape and shade as hers.

"Dad?" She whispered. Hiccup smiled at her and nodded. Camicazi turned back to Savage as if seeking conformation.

"You were born to the Hooligan Tribe of Berk. Daughter of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third and Astrid. Sister to Finn. You are Camicazi Horrendous Haddock." She turned back to Hiccup as Savage said this last bit. She couldn't find the words to say, she had no clue about what she was supposed to do, but she knew what she wanted to do. And she took no shame in it. She ran forwards and flung herself into Hiccup's open arms and held onto him as if she would never let go. She cried into his shoulder and buried her face in his neck as he crouched down to hold her tight. For the first time in her life she was being hugged by her father, and knew it. It felt wonderful, he held her tightly and made her feel safe and loved. She was where she belonged.

Reviews always appreciated. Don't worry this is not the end... or maybe that is something to worry about, I don't know :P

24. Chapter 24

**Sorry it's going to be a long one! **

The Skrill growled and pulled frustrated against the chains restraining him. He had been fighting for days to get free, to find his human. He had to find her, to protect her. He struggled, the chains digging into him as he did so. As soon as he was free he'd shoot anyone who got between him and his Camicazi. The doors were opened and he saw the same people come tentatively closer to him, bringing with them a basket of fish. Once again he refused it, his jaw bound shut to prevent him blasting them.

"Sparky?" He stopped struggling, he knew that voice. It was that voice that spurred him to struggle. "It's ok boy... It's ok. I'm here, don't worry." Out of the bright light came her small figure, her blonde hair was loose for once and tumbling around her shoulders, the sun shining through it making it look as though her head was glowing, like some sort of goddess. She came towards him slowly, stumbling ever so slightly; he could sense her feeling weak. Her wound was causing her discomfort. He tried to pull free to help her but was still restrained.

"Shh, its ok boy. Stop struggling its ok." She held out her hands as she had when they first met and began to sing softly to him, edging forwards all the while. He wanted her to come closer quicker; he needed to feel her touch to know she was ok. He wasn't going to hurt her, she had to know that. She had to know how much he had missed her, how much he loved her. He pulled against the chains more and she came rushing towards him, throwing her arms around his neck.

"Easy boy, easy. I'm here. It's all going to be ok, I promise. I'm safe and you're safe. That's what matters." She whispered stroking

his head with one hand. "I'm going to take this off you," she said placing her hand over the leather strap that held his jaws together "but you must not blast them or hurt them at all. They're family. My family." The dragon froze and looked from the people in the door, the man, Hiccup who had saved her, standing beside his Night Fury. Could it really be? Had she found her real family. "This is where I belong. And where you'll be safe too. I understand if you can't stay here, because of Toothless... But will you at least visit sometimes?" She said through tears as she pulled off the restraints and removed the chains holding him. Sparky felt horrified. How could she think he'd leave her? "I can't just leave though. This is my family and my home. I have a chance to train properly, to be loved and cared for. I can't leave now. But you aren't tied down. You can go if you want..." He nuzzled her and curled himself around her tightly, as if to hug her. He'd never leave her. No matter what. She was his, and he was hers. They'd stay together forever. As far as he was concerned, it didn't matter where they were, as long as they were together. He let out a gentle rumble to tell her how glad he was that she was ok, that he had missed her and would never leave her. She seemed to understand... "I missed you too, and I know I heard you... Thank you boy, you bought me back. I love you so much; you're the best friend I could ever hope for. And I'm glad you're not going to leave... I don't know what I would do without you." She clutched him as though he might disappear at any moment, he didn't care, he remained curled around her and sat happily for a while, just glad to have her there.

Hiccup watched from the entrance of Sparky's pen. Her response to her dragon, his response to her... It reminded him of how he and Toothless would respond to one another. Thirteen years away from them, and yet somehow, she was still like them. A gentle hand reached out and touched his shoulder.

"She's so like you." Astrid said, her hand slipping down to entwine her fingers with his, her head rested on his shoulder, Hiccup could still see the faint tear tracks on her face. They'd been there since she had found out Camicazi was the baby she had lost. Astrid had never really gotten over the loss of the baby, neither of them had.

Astrid had suffered the most though, Hiccup expected it was because she'd been carrying her for nine months and then only had the baby to hold for a couple of short weeks before she was lost. Astrid had gone through various stages, from the total refusal to accept it and the endless searching, to the terrible depression. Astrid had been so miserable for so long, even Stormfly couldn't make her smile. She wouldn't go out flying, or training. She'd barely take care of herself let alone Finn. She'd barely eaten and had quickly become unhealthily thin. Finn had cried something awful during that dark time; Hiccup had been entirely responsible for taking care of Finn as well as the village. It had been hard on him. Astrid got worse, Stormfly became more and more distressed. Hiccup began to get more and more afraid for her... She was going rapidly downhill, it wasn't like Astrid. The woman he'd seen everyday was not the strong independent Viking he'd fallen in love with, that he'd married. Who had sworn she would always be strong, that she'd be strong for her child, for him. His beautiful Astrid had become so broken. It had taken a long time before she'd found any strength. It seemed no matter how broken she had felt, she wasn't going to let any more harm come to her family.

To see her now, staring upon the baby she had lost grown up was amazing and yet, painful. He knew how much it must be hurting her. It hurt him to know what she'd gone through, to know that his daughter, his beautiful baby girl, had for so long, been under the care of his enemy. Had called his enemy father. It made Hiccup angry. But she was strong. Frighteningly so. She was a born warrior like Astrid, she has shown already that she could fight as well as anyone. She'd fought a dozen Berserkers and could easily have killed Dagur and his son if she had wanted to. The blood that had stained her arms from the fight, the way she had stepped forward with that determined stare, it had reminded him so much of Astrid during the battles for Berk. Including the battle in which Camicazi herself had been lost. She fought now with the same courage and power that Astrid always had. Astrid sighed as she watched Camicazi embrace Sparky. Hiccup finally responded to what she had said. "She's like you. So very much like you. She's strong, and tough and fearless. She's got the Hofferson's fearless streak in her." Astrid looked at him and smiled.

"Even the most fearless Hoffersons are afraid of something. I'm always afraid to lose you, or Finn or Stormfly and Toothless, I was afraid when we lost her."

"Well she's home now. And she's as much of a fighter as you are." Astrid smiled and then quickly wiped her eyes, still reluctant to show emotions openly. But she hadn't seen Camicazi since she'd woken up, and certainly not since Camicazi discovered they were family.

Camicazi finally let go of her dragon and turned to look at them, Hiccup holding onto Astrid and standing there watching her, Toothless lying close by with Stormfly. Camicazi kissed Sparky on his beautiful head and ran at her parents at full speed, flinging her arms around them both and screaming out "Mum! Dad!" as she did so. At this point Astrid could no longer hide her tears, she sank to the floor and hugged her daughter tightly, clutching at her baby girl. Hiccup let go of them both and stepped back to allow Astrid a moment.

"Oh, my baby girl! My little girl! You're ok! You're home now." Astrid sobbed as she squeezed Camicazi in her arms. Camicazi cried too, hugging Astrid and tugging at the fabric of her shirt around her shoulder blades as a frightened child might. Toothless let out a rumble as the Skrill stepped out from his pen.

"Hey it's ok bud." Hiccup said soothingly stroking the Night Fury as Finn stepped into the academy.

"FINN!" Camicazi yelled unexpectedly and let go of Astrid and threw herself at Finn, he would have fallen onto the ground if Stormfly hadn't been walking behind him at that very moment. As she wrapped her arms around his neck and held on tight Finn patted her back with one hand slightly awkwardly.

"Umm, hey. Good to see you up and about..."

"Finn! I can't believe it! I'm so happy now!" She held onto him and he looked at his parents for an explanation. Hiccup stepped forward carefully.

"She's your sister. The baby we lost... It's her. She's home." He said softly. As the words sank in Finn's expression changed from

confused, to stunned to happiness as he remembered vaguely the little baby he'd stood watching the day she was lost. He wrapped his arms around her too and smiled, lifting his little sister off the ground with the force of his hug.

"Sister! My baby sister!" He cried delighted. Hiccup and Astrid came over and embraced both of their children, together as a family for the first time in thirteen years. All was well.

And I bet you wish it ended here, with a happy ever after... Um... I wish that too... But life on Berk is never calm and quiet. There's a fresh threat looming and we'll discover it soon.

25. Chapter 25

Berk was enveloped in darkness and a chill was spreading through the village. But there was something else on the air that night, something besides the cold, and it was keeping Hiccup awake. He tossed and turned in his sleep causing Astrid to groan beside him.

"Hiccup would you stop moving. It's freezing and you keep tugging the blanket off me and moving around." She grumbled as she pulled the blanket back over herself. Hiccup groaned and slid out of the bed his legs over the side of the bed and sat up, rubbing his eyes with his palms.

"Errr, don't get out of the bed... Now I'm really cold." She rolled over again and tried to pull him back down onto the bed.

"I'm going to take a quick walk, check on a few things... Something's up, I can feel it."

"Switch off the paranoid father and chief thing please. I need my husband to curl up and sleep next to me and keep me warm." She tugged on his arms trying to get him to budge. He stood up and pulled on his tunic.

"I might be able to sleep after I've checked a few things." He whispered turning around and kissing her on the forehead. She made a vague noise and Hiccup smiled. "I'll definitely be able to sleep after I've checked on things. I promise."

"Eurgh, fine, just be quick about it." She smirked and lay back down. Hiccup smiled more and walked out of the room. He'd check on Finn first, and then Camicazi, she was sleeping with Stormfly and Toothless at the moment, at her own insistence. She'd refused to let anyone give up their bed for her and said she'd prefer it to sleeping on the floor. Hiccup pushed open the door of Finn's room and poked his head inside; the young Timberjack raised her head sleepily and looked at him with weary eyes. He put a finger to his lips and tiptoed in a little more, he stroked her head softly and crept over to Finn's bed and looked down on his sleeping son's face. Finn's face was ever so slightly screwed up and Hiccup could tell he was dreaming. Smiling he left the room to check on Camicazi.

He crept out to where the dragons were curled up asleep, Hiccup gestured to a sleepy Toothless to raise his wing so Hiccup could see Camicazi... But she was not there. Hiccup was about to panic and

scream out to the whole village when he noticed a small figure darting towards in the direction of the academy.

It suddenly occurred to Hiccup that she probably wanted to see Sparky, he was still in the academy for safety. He patted Toothless on the head and gestured that he wanted Toothless to join him. The dragon yawned and stared at him.

"Come on bud, I want to go check she's ok, and that everything is ok. Maybe it's just having Dagur on the island but I feel like something is up." Toothless let out an annoyed grumble that clearly said he didn't want to get up. "Toothless come on bud, please. I'll give you extra cod for breakfast." He bribed. The Night Fury shifted slightly but didn't get up. "Oh come on bud, I need to check on her. Please?" Hiccup tried his hardest to get a sympathy vote from Toothless but the dragon ignored him. Hiccup sighed... It was time to stoop to the low level... "Stormfly?" The Nadder chirped and flicked Toothless lightly with her tail, he growled and she chirped again and he slowly stretched standing up and giving Hiccup the most evil look he could muster. Nuzzling Stormfly he stepped over to Hiccup and allowed him to climb onto his back.

"Females huh bud? Make you do things you don't want to." Hiccup chuckled patting his friend; the dragon grumbled his agreement and took to the skies searching for Camicazi.

They flew low over the academy... but she wasn't there, and the people Hiccup had left to guard the Skrill were unconscious.

"Oh no..." Hiccup said as he looked down at the scene... "Bud..." But Toothless already knew what Hiccup was going to say and flew into the academy to check for the Skrill before going to find Camicazi. "Sparky? Are you here? Cami?"

The restraining chains were undone and the Skrill gone... and there was no sign of Camicazi at all. Hiccup panicked, Dagur was still on the island... he wanted that Skrill... what if he took her? Or what if everything this afternoon had been a smoke screen, what if she was leaving anyway? He had to find her.

26. Chapter 26

****Sorry for the long wait... Life got seriously hectic!****

Camicazi slipped quietly into the cells and walked up to the cell door she'd come to open. She stood before the cell door and glanced back to make sure the guards were still out of it. Seeing that they were she used the key she'd snatched from one of them to unlock the door and waited for it's occupant to step out...

Slowly, uncertainly the tall man walked out from his cell and turned to stare at her. She didn't hesitate and threw her arms around his middle and hugged him tightly. "I'm here to get you out of here, to set you free... To give you a chance. I know what will happen to you else." She let go of him and tugged on his arm to get him to follow her outside to where Sparky was waiting. She climbed onto her dragon and helped him on behind her. "There's a secluded cove down off the cliff edge at the other side of the island. I've got a boat waiting for you, and some supplies. You have to sail away from here as fast

as you can. Go anywhere where you'll be safe from him." She was telling him as Sparky flew with the blazing speed that characterised his class to the cove she spoke of. They landed smoothly and abruptly on the beach and she slid off Sparky's back without any issue and hurried him to do the same. "Hurry! I snuck out and if he wakes up and finds me gone he'll come looking for me. You have to go! Then you'll be ok." She stood by the boat looking flustered and desperate. He slowly slipped off the dragon; he'd never actually touched it before. Patting it's head lightly he walked towards her and stared. "What are you waiting for? Hurry!"

"Why are you doing this?" He asked her. She looked at him as if he was mad. "Why save me? I don't deserve it."

"Because whatever stupid things you've done in your life, you were always there for me." She said softly and staring at him with tearful eyes. She'd been crying all day. "I'd have been beaten a lot worse, treated a lot worse and potentially already dead or discovering I killed my own father. Or maybe never knowing who he was if it wasn't for you. You trained me, cared for me. And I can't just watch as you get sent back with Dagur. He'll kill you, we both know it. But Dad can't accept you here either. I know that. So I'm giving you a chance. Get the hell off this island and get to someplace where you'll be safe. Maybe come back and visit me one day... But get away from here..." She paused "Please."

Hiccup and Toothless flew low over the island, keeping at a distance. Toothless had spotted Camicazi and Sparky down by the cells, but they had been leaving when Toothless found them. The guards Hiccup had left were unconscious and a cell door was open. Hiccup had feared she might have still tried to betray them, but something within him knew better. They'd followed the Skrill down to this secluded cove and hidden themselves downwind of them in the forest. Hiccup watched Camicazi pleading and thought hard about what she was doing and why.

27. Chapter 27

He stared at her. She was willing to do anything to get him to safety. She might have given reason, but he still didn't deserve it. Savage looked at her, she might be a frightened child, but he had seen the young woman, the warrior behind those eyes. She was no longer a child; she had never truly been a child. She'd never had the chance.

"Go Savage, please." Her eyes were watering, she feared what would happen if her Dad should find out. She wanted so badly to spend more time with him, to talk to him and learn more about his past, and how it affected her now, but she wanted him safe above all. He'd looked after her, true he hadn't always come through for her, but she'd have been in a lot worse state if he'd not been there to look after her. She wanted to give him a chance, a second chance to do things right. He couldn't do that here. And it wasn't like Dagur would give him the chance.

>"Here, take this." Savage said suddenly, pulling a gold bracelet from his arm and handing it to her. "A long time ago your... I mean... Tallulah had this made. It has two halves that can join together. After she was killed I found the other half... I wore both in her memory. You should have it now, so even after I'm gone,

somehow we'll still both be with you." Camicazi stared at him in numb disbelief. This was a very sentimental gift. She pulled from her own neck a thin cord with a dragons' scale on it. One of Sparky's.
"Then you have to take this. So you'll have a part of me too." He took the necklace and she the bracelet.
>"I'm proud of you." He said quietly as he walked towards the little boat. "You've come so far since I first met you, and even in the last few days you've come so very far. You've coped with so much more than you should ever have had to, and yet somehow you've still come out of it strong and wonderful. I hope someday I get to see you as the fierce warrior and dragon trainer I know you'll become. You're going to be an amazing woman Camicazi, I just hope I get the chance to see it." At this point Camicazi ran forwards and hugged him tightly.
"I don't want to say goodbye... What if I never do see you again?" She whispered through very soft tears she was pretending weren't there.
>"Someday Camicazi. Someday we will see each other again. I promise." He replied, crouching down to hug her properly.
"I hope so... I'm going to miss you Savage." She said as he held her at arm's length to look at her clearly, wiping the tears from her eyes.
>"I'm going to miss you too. But we shall see each other again, I'm sure of it. But for now, we say goodbye." He kissed her forehead and climbed into the boat, cutting the ropes that held it to the shore.
"Goodbye." She breathed as the boat began to move away slowly. A small wave of her hand and Sparky took to the air, beating his wings in an effort to help the boat move away faster. As Savage's figure shrank into the distance, she saw him raise a hand to wave farewell. She raised her own as silent tears fell down her face.

Hiccup had Toothless swoop silently down behind her. He dismounted and walked over to wrap his arms around his crying daughter.
>"It's alright baby." He soothed as she shook in his arms. He didn't want her to think he was angry; he just needed her to know he understood and that he was there for her.
"Are you mad at me?" She said in a quiet voice he'd never get used to hearing, but never tired of.
>"Of course not. I was worried when I found you gone. But I'm not angry about what you've done. I understand why you did it." She sniffed at they stood there for a moment to watch the ship sail off growing ever smaller. "Let's get you home." He said gently after a while. She didn't protest and simply wrapped her arms around him like a child. Hiccup scooped her up, thankful that for once she was conscious and carried her over to Toothless. Sparky landed close by and looked on uncertainly. Cami looked at him over Hiccup's shoulder.<p>

"Sparky, go back to the academy boy. I'll see you in the morning." The dragon paused a moment longer but then obediently flew off. Hiccup climbed onto Toothless and held his daughter close as they flew back home. He was glad she was alright, he'd worried when he saw her gone. He'd lost her once before, he would never lose her again. This he promised.
>But we can't always keep our promises.<p>

Let me know what you think :)

****Sorry it's been a while. I know where this one is going, but getting there is going to be tricky. I think the next few chapters will be a bit family feels orientated. Let me know what you think! I always appreciate reviews!****

When Hiccup awoke the next morning he saw two blonde heads lying close beside him. It took him a moment to figure out what he was seeing but when he did, his face broke into a wide but sleepy smile. As usual his beautiful Astrid lay beside him slumbering quietly, her blonde hair loose and perfect, but curled up between them was the smaller blonde head of their precious daughter. Camicazi had crept in during the night and curled up between them. He doubted highly that she'd ever been able to do that before. The frightened and nervous look in her green eyes had clarified that but he'd happily let her cuddle up with them. Astrid hadn't minded at all, simply relieved to have her daughter back. Hiccup wished with all his might that they could simply stay there all day... But being a chief has some major disadvantages. He groaned slightly as he pulled himself from his warm bed to the sound of Toothless warbling outside.

>He was just returning from feeding Toothless when he heard footsteps on the wooden stairs. A moment later, Camicazi appeared. Her hair stuck up at odd angles and her eyes had huge bags under them. She stumbled in with careful strength, her side obviously still causing her some discomfort. He walked over, ready to assist but she slapped his hand away.
>"I'm fine..." She muttered as she settled onto a chair, yawning. She began running her fingers through her hair and braiding it, still muttering things under her breath. Hiccup couldn't quite make out what she was saying. He watched her for a few minutes and then she stood quite suddenly and began rummaging through piles of things looking for something.

>After a minute she'd pulled on her own leather armour and grabbed her sword and axe and walked to the door.
>"Woah woah woah. Where do you think you're going young lady?" Hiccup said, quickly blocking her exit. She looked up at him with his green eyes. They suited her much better he decided.

>"I'm going out. I'm going to go do some training so next time I don't nearly get myself killed. I'm not good enough yet, so I have to work harder to get better." Her voice was flat and felt almost rehearsed, like it was all too familiar. Hiccup felt a sickening in his stomach. What in Hel's name had Dagur done to his daughter?
>"You're not going anywhere." She pouted at him, a fierce glare in her eyes. Hiccup recognised that look from Astrid, and more often than not, it was a death sentence.

>"Why not?!" She spat.
>"Because you are not yet fully recovered. You have nothing to be fighting with now. You and Sparky are safe here. You're home Cami. You're where you belong. And as your father, I'm not letting you push yourself too far too soon!"

She glared at him for a moment longer before her gaze softened and she looked at the floor, sighing, her shoulders sagged and she dropped her weapons. She sank to the floor and hugged her knees, staring blindly ahead.

>Hiccup sighed. It killed him to see her in this state. All those years, how she must have suffered, and he'd never done anything. He hadn't known... But it hurt him to know all this time, Dagur had had his precious daughter, he'd done this to her.
>"I don't know who I am." She said softly through tears. Hiccup sat beside her, drawing her into his arms and kissing the top of her head softly, brushing the loose strands out of her wet eyes.

>"I know who you are."
>"No... I have a name, it's not who I am"

though."

>"I know that. You are a fierce warrior. You don't give up. You are strong and tough with a casual kind of beauty that could only have come from your mother. Beyond that though, at your core, you are a Dragon-Whisperer. You have the soul of a dragon, a deep and raw connection and understanding of them. You are the daughter of a warrior. You are the Dragon-Whisperer's Daughter. My daughter."<p>

29. Chapter 29

Sorry it's been a while guys! And that its a little short and not too good. This is more a stop gap, after all, time doesn't stand still.

Three years later

>Time moved in the blink of an eye, but, Hiccup thought, he ought to have seen that coming. He groaned and stretched out in his bed. Beside him Astrid grumbled in her sleep. All was quiet for once in the Haddock household. Hiccup breathed a sigh of relief.
"Hey! Get your hands off my shield!"

>"I need it!"
"Get your own!"

>"It's in the forge!"
"Should've fixed it then shouldn't you?!"

>"I was busy!"
"Busy playing chase with Buffnut!"

>"Shut up!"
"It's true isn't it?!"

>"I said shut up!" He groaned again as the voices of his two children echoed up the stairs.
"Finn loves Buff! Finn loves Buff!" His daughter Camicazi sang.

>"Cami don't make me hurt you!" Finn, Hiccup's eldest child, his son and heir, yelled.
"You'd have to catch me first loser!" She laughed. He heard the door open and feet thundering down the steps and the call of a dragon.

>"Do you think they'll ever stop?" He mumbled into Astrid's hair
"They're not children anymore Hiccup. They will bicker, siblings do. Remember the twins?"

>"Remember? They never changed."
"Question answered." He moaned.

Camicazi laughed loudly as she flew through the air on the back of her Skrill, Sparky. Finn had long since given up the chase; his Timberjack Guillotine was no match for Sparky's speed. She let her legs slide down Sparky's neck, relaxing from her standing position atop his back in favour of a more comfortable seated one. Cami was the best rider out of the young Viking dragon riders. But she had been riding longest, the other riders dragons had only begun to fly with riders about two years ago. Cami had settled into life on Berk with relative ease. Having only arrived here three years ago, having been lost to her family for thirteen year, it hadn't been easy to start with. But after a little love and encouragement, she soon found her place.

>Sparky rumbled at her and she grinned, tapping his side gently with her boot, encouraging him to fly down to the academy where the other youths were waiting for the days training. And maybe a chance to have a race. Camicazi loved racing, and she and Sparky were undefeated.
"Top o' the morning gang!" She laughed as she jumped casually from Sparky's back as he landed gracefully. "How is everyone today?"

>"Pretty good but your brother looks mighty cross." Buffnut laughed,

putting an arm around her shoulders. As the only other female in the group, the two got on pretty well.
"Yeah, I wouldn't let him borrow my shield this morning."

>"That wasn't what made me angry Cami and you know it." Finn growled walking in. He was nearly as tall as their dad now, just under six foot. Finn wore his hair longer and had a small stubbly beard; their parents said he was looking more and more like their Grandpa Stoick every day. Cami could see that, but he was less stocky.
She missed her Grandpa. It was hard to believe it had been almost a year since he died. It still hurt her to remember it. First the strange people had come, dragon trappers like Eret. But they weren't the worst of it. They'd been tools in a bigger operation. It was their boss, Drago Bludvist that had been the real threat. They'd fought hard against him, against his Bewilderbeast, but it wasn't enough. It defeated her grandmother's Alpha and took over. No dragon can resist the alpha.

>Camicazi had tried to do the right thing, to be a warrior, to defend her family's honour, but it hadn't helped. It had made things worse. Drago laughed in her face and threw her aside as if she were merely a twig. She'd felt so helpless, unable to stop him taking her dragon. Her Dad had protected her, pulling her aside, keeping her safe, reuniting her with her brother and turning on Drago himself, Toothless by his side. Cami had felt safe then, nothing could stop Toothless, they'd stop Drago and his Bewilderbeast.
That's when it happened. Drago had his Alpha take control of Toothless. She'd been so afraid. Toothless turned on her Dad, Finn wouldn't let her go. But her Grandpa had come to the rescue. She remembered that horrid moment when Toothless woke up, he couldn't understand why Stoick wouldn't wake, why her dad was so angry. They'd watched in horror as their dragons left them and then Cami had attended her first Viking funeral, watching as her father shot the first arrow, sending her grandpa up in flames.

>She looked up at Finn. He did look like him. It was becoming more and more clear, but in appearance only. Finn didn't have the same hard character their grandpa once had.
"Sorry Finn, I was only teasing." She said quietly. His gaze softened, he knew what she was seeing. He hugged her tightly.

>"Well less of it thanks!"
"What?" She laughed. "Someone has to make sure our future chief can toughen up!"

>"Oh shut it." They all laughed as Gobber walked in yelling at them to shut up ready for training.<p>

30. Chapter 30

The horn blared out over the village about three hours later. Hiccup stood up tall, readjusting the fur cape he only wore for special occasions as he made his way outside. The Meathead tribe were visiting again today. The two tribes had been allies for years, back when Stoick and Mogadon the Meathead had been in charge. Now it was Mogadon's son Thuggory the First who was in charge. Despite Thuggory being rather more Viking like, he and Hiccup got on very well and in the last few years the two tribes had been exceptionally close. Thuggory's own son, Thuggory the Second, got on well with all the youths, being the same age helped, and even Camicazi got on well with the Meathead boys and gave a grumble as he stood up waiting patiently for Hiccup to climb onto his back. Astrid was already sat on Stormfly's back and Hiccup could see Finn, Buffnut, Miktak and Rufflout all mounting their own dragons ready to fly down to the docks. His eyes scanned the village and the skies and he sighed.

>"Where is she?"<p>

"Yeah!" Camicazi cheered as Sparky caught her mid-fall somewhere just off the island named Itchy Armpit. After training and a few quick races, Camicazi and Sparky had flown off to do some training of their own. The trust fall was just a warm up for them. Cami jumped up to a standing position on his back and adjusted her helmet. She'd modelled it on her father's one and recreated her leather armour. When they stood side by side wearing it all, she looked like his miniature.

>"Alright boy, you ready?" The Skrill gave a snort as if to ask why she'd ask such a stupid question. "Ok let's do this!" Sparky dived down forcing her to flatten herself in a swift jump, against his back, he levelled off just above the surface of the sea and she jumped back to her feet issuing a bellowing roar. It was answered seconds later by a pod of Thunderdrums as they broke the surface. She jumped from Sparky's back onto one as it flew low above the water. She let out another call and after a minute a Scauldron appeared and she jumped onto it's head as it rose up from the water. A few dragon calls later and she'd gone from sea level to jumping swiftly between a Hobblegrunt, a Raincutter, a Nadder, a Zippleback, a Nightmare, a Timberjack, a Snafflefang and a Hackatoo before leaping back onto Sparky's back. She'd been working on her dragon calls lately and finally she'd worked out how to call each for different purposes. She could now jump from moving dragon to moving dragon with ease, and summon nearby dragons to catch her when she misjudged her leap. They landed back on Itchy Armpit and Cami leapt down, skidding to a halt as Sparky landed beside her.
"I think that went pretty well don't you boy?" The dragon grunted, standing still as she pulled her leather skirt from one of his saddle bags, it was easier to fly and move in just leggings. "Awww come on boy, I might need it someday. Just training." She then pulled the staff she'd been making from where it was strapped to the back of her saddle. She'd modelled it on her grandmother's staff but only one end was sickle shaped, the other end had a round rock attached to it, to act as a bludgeon. She pulled a small knife from her boot and resumed her carving of runes onto the staff.

>"I wish we could do this more often." She sighed. Sparky snorted to say it wasn't like they didn't do it most days. "Alright alright I hear you!" She laughed. "It's nice to have a bit of time though huh? No training with the others, watching Finn practise for chieftom or running round with Buffnut. Man that's gross." She laughed. "And she seems to like it! That's even weirder. Sometimes I hate getting older boy." She sighed. "The boys are all chasing girls and I hate it. Being sixteen is no fun." Sparky chirped "Ok ok, so I'm nearly seventeen but it's no better. I've seen the way the boys look at the girls, at me. Even the Meatheads are like it every time they're here..." She froze suddenly then jumped to her feet dropping the knife and staff to the floor.
"Oh Thor's saggy underpants! Meatheads! They're arriving today! I'm supposed to be there to see them in!" She quickly grabbed the knife and staff and replaced each to its rightful place before jumping back onto Sparky's back. "Alright boy, I need to see that speed now. Back to Berk!" She called and Sparky obediently shot into the sky, blazing back to Berk like a streak of lightning.

"Where is she?" Hiccup asked through gritted teeth, his eyes scanning the skies as the Meathead ships got closer to the docks. He could hear voices now they were that close.

>"I expect she's doing exactly as you were doing at her age." Astrid said through a smile as she waved at their guests on the ship.
"Flying around, exploring and avoiding her duties."
"I wasn't..."
Hiccup stopped when she glanced at him with a single eyebrow raised.
"Alright point taken. But she knows about this, and she gets on with them..."
>"And she's stubborn. If she wants to be doing something else..."
"...She'll do it." The boats pulled up at the dock and Hiccup fixed the smile back on his face as Thuggory and his son walked off.
>"Hiccup!" Thuggory boomed walking over and clapping Hiccup's shoulder. "It is always good to see you old friend! I trust you are well?"
"Very well thank you Thuggory. And yourself?"
>"Quite excellent. And the lovely Astrid, are you keeping well?"
"Yes thank you."
>"Thuggory, Thuggory Junior." Finn said holding out his hand for the younger man to shake.
"Finn, it's good to see you."
>"Ah yes, Finn. Looking very like your grandpa I must say. Are you doing alright young man?"
"Absolutely thank you sir."
>"You got the girl yet then Finn?" Thuggory Junior asked grinning.
"Shut up, working on it." Finn said grinning back.

>"Where's that charming daughter of yours Hiccup?" Thuggory asked peering around as they began walking back up to the village.
"Yeah, where is Cami?" His son asked looking around for the familiar blonde.
>"No clue," Finn said "Probably off flying somewhere."
"We actually wanted to speak with you Hiccup, about your daughter."

>"Oh?" Hiccup gestured to Finn to leave. He had a strong suspicion he knew what this was about, and Finn did not need to be here to hear it before Cami would. Finn looked curious but took his cue and left.
"Catch you later Thugs."
>"What did you want to speak with me about, that concerns my little girl?"<p>

Well things might be about to get a little chaotic on Berk. Let me know what you think of the chapter, or any guesses you have. I like seeing what people suspect.

31. Chapter 31

Camicazi was standing atop Sparky's back as they approached Berk.
"Come on boy, they'll kill me if I'm late. Land in the forest edge so I can act like I wasn't out flying!" Normally she wouldn't care, but she ought to make an effort. The Meatheads were one of their strongest allies and she did like them. She got on well with Thuggory Junior, but he got his moments. The older they got, the more so. As the boys grew older, they grew more interested in girls. As in going out, kissing... and may the gods spare her, marriage contracts. Camicazi had no interest in that. But Thuggory had been showing more interest in her than she was overly thrilled about. She liked him, but she wasn't interested in a romantic relationship with him.
"Sparky, down now!" She called. She could see the ships had already docked. She was dead.

"You knew this would happen sooner or later." Astrid said. Thuggory and his son were catching up with Gobber and Valka. Hiccup frowned.

>"Doesn't mean I like it."
"I can see that. She's growing up though Hiccup. She's seventeen in a week. Your mother was married to your father by her age."
>"And you and I were not married until we were twenty."
"Hiccup... She can't stay your little girl forever."
>"I know that but," Hiccup sighed "It feels like yesterday she got here. I'm just not ready to let her go yet."
"No more am I. But Thuggory is a good man..." She said slowly.
>"You aren't sure about this either."
"I just know if you'd tried something like this I'd have been furious."
>"Yeah I know that. Not that I could've, but I'd always have asked you directly. It's your choice in my opinion."
"And I think that's the problem. They're doing things the old way. I doubt highly she'll appreciate that."
>"She's my little girl. My baby girl." He said looking at Astrid almost pleadingly.
"I know babe, I know." Thuggory and his son returned to them.
>"So, what do you say? Shall we draw up a contract for..."<p>

Camicazi landed swiftly, leaping from Sparky's back having tugged her skirt on whilst still airborne. "I'll see you back at the house! Be good boy!" She called as she ran as fast as her legs would carry her towards the village. She cursed as she spotted her parents talking with Thuggory and his dad. She was already late. She ran still faster, skidding to a halt in front of her mother, crashing into her father's back.

>"I'm here! I'm here! Hi, it's great to see you both. Sorry I'm late I was just helping with... Oh screw this, I was out flying with Sparky. Sorry, I totally forgot!" She grinned, flicking her braid back over her shoulder. "What you guys talking about?" She asked looking at her parents' less than ecstatic faces and the grin on both the Thuggorys' faces.<p>

"Cami..."

>"No! No! I will not accept this!" She yelled as her father led her into the house where they were less likely to be overheard. He stood in front of the door to stop her running out and flying off.
"Cami, no one is saying you have to. They were just asking about..."

>"No... NO! They were asking you! They were not asking about! They were not going to ask me what I thought! I was going to be sold like a fish or a yak!" She shrieked
"Camicazi, you think I would just sell you off?!"

>"I didn't think so but now..."
"I would not have. I was going to tell them, before you came over, they'd have to take it up with you. It was not my place to make that decision for you."

>"You think I should though don't you?"
"I don't know Camicazi! The first time I saw my little girl she was thirteen years old. My baby was taken from me and I finally saw her and she was nearly grown up. I don't want to consider you growing up any more than I want to consider that Finn is."

>"But you think it would be wise... 'unity of the tribes' he said." She spat bitterly.
"Cami, no one is forcing you to..."

>"I cannot and will not be bought! And Berk is my home!" She yelled, running up the stairs and out of the sky window. Hiccup tried to run after her, but he heard Sparky call and knew she'd gone.
"Don't, just give her a bit of space." Astrid said taking hold of his arm.
"It's a lot to take in."

Camicazi was glaring at the clouds as they unfurled beneath her like some great blanket. She continued staring her death glare at them for a minute before yelling in frustration and punching the air with her fists before laying down on Sparky's back. Sparky gave a rumble of concern at her obvious frustration.

>"Don't worry boy, I'm not letting anyone take me away from you." She assured him, patting his neck. "I promise." She sighed as she sat up again looking around her. "How long do you reckon I have before Dad comes looking for me?" She asked watching the skies, expecting Toothless to swoop out of the clouds with her Dad at any minute. "I'd run, I would. I'd just keep going right now and not look back. But Berk is my home. And I love it." She slumped and sang softly
"I didn't mean to come here and I didn't mean to stay,
>It's just where the sea wind blew me,
One accidental day,
>It wasn't where I meant to be,
Wasn't where I had my start,

>But now I'll never leave these rain soaked bogs,
Because Berk is where I left my heart." It was the Hooligan's national anthem and she found it fitted her fairly well. "Come on boy, we'll take a flight down to Badmist Island and then head home. I just need to clear my head a bit." Camicazi tugged her helmet from the saddle bags and went to pull it over her head. She'd just been readjusting herself for the flight when she first heard it. A familiar roar. But it was one of great distress and pain.

>"Furious..." She muttered. She remembered her first meeting with the great dragon as if it was only yesterday.
It had been last summer, not long after her grandpa had died. She and Sparky had sought shelter in a cavern in a mountainside to wait out a great windy storm. She remembered hearing a voice in her head, a voice that was not hers. It hissed and spat, muttering and questioning

>"Is this real, can this truly be the one I have come so far for? It cannot be." She'd called out, certain she was imagining things.
"You hear me in your head" It had stated simply

>"And I don't like it! Get out!"
"It is my only way to communicate with something as thick as you." It sneered. She growled at it.

"You'd be unwise to attack, I am far greater than you."

>"A man is not measured in size for his greatness, but for his bravery, courage and compassion. Come out and face me!" She'd heard it shuffle but Sparky had leapt down and coiled around her, stretching his wings and growling defensively.
"He protects you?" She'd placed a hand on his head to soothe him

>"As I would for him. But since you seem to be invading my thoughts, surely you can see that." She felt violated as her own memories flashed before her.
"You protect the dragons?"

>"I am a Dragon Whisperer." She'd stated. "I live with my father, our chief who is also a Dragon Whisperer, and under the protection of his dragon, our Alpha."
"The Night Fury became an Alpha.

Interesting..."

>"How do you know Toothless?"
"That is not important right now." She'd heard something moving again. "What is important is knowing if you are the one I seek. Are you the one the fates tell of? Are you the one I must fight beside against my better judgment?"

>"Fight with?" Then he'd blinked a huge yellow eye and lowered his huge head to look directly at her, his head was as long as she was tall, if not longer.
"There is a war that will threaten my kind and your way of life. The fates say I shall join forces with a most unusual human to win the war and save my kind. Only then can I fulfil my promise once and for all."

>"What promise is that?" She'd asked, but she'd known even then she'd regret it.
"That I will never love, care for, protect, trust or

help a human again." He growled, his eyes narrowing dangerously.

>"A dragon never breaks his promise."
"Indeed."

>"My father says 'we cannot always keep our promises' "
"Your father, is human."

>"Does not mean he's wrong." She spat back.
"Hmmm... It is you... How very odd."

>"What's so odd about me?" She asked defensively.
"You are small, female with no apparent skills in leading armies or battle, who trains and protects dragons, and I see in your eyes you know our lullaby. You are a most unusual human, and even more unexpected for your fate."

>"My fate?"
"You will play a part in shaping the futures of both my kind and your own, your way of life. Your very way of living, my very life may depend on your actions."

>"That's a lot of expectation on me."
"You cannot cope with it perhaps."

>"I was born for this. I'll do whatever it takes." She said determined.
"Then it seems I have found what I came for."

>"So you came all this way to find me?"
"You see where I am from?" He'd asked surprised. She'd stared back into that eye and seen his mind open, his thoughts and memories flash before her.

>"Yes. I see your home in the frozen North, your bitter past here in the archipelago, I see your betrayal, your pain, I see your story and your purpose... Furious."<p>

She blinked away the memory. She'd made a promise to herself that day. She'd sworn that she would prevent any further harm coming to Furious. She'd not seen him since then, but he'd promised her would return.

>"Change of plans boy. We're heading to the Isle of Doom. Furious needs us..."<p>

They flew low over the jagged black lumps of rock and dark forests that were the Isle of Doom. The island was uninhabited by Vikings due to the fact that it was only accessible by ship one week of the year, and ships could only leave it for that week as well. It was only since the dragons they'd been able to explore it further. The dragons that lived there were as wild and untamed as the seas that surrounded it. Camicazi listened for the roar as she had Sparky set down on the island. As she dismounted she took only her staff.

>"Go on ahead boy, I'll check around here, you go scour the mountains and I'll meet you at their base." She said, she knew he was reluctant by he did as she said anyway.<p>

She searched through the forests, dealing calmly with every dragon she came across. She was subduing a Monstrous Nightmare when she first felt the familiar feeling of being watched. She picked up her staff and turned, crouching to the floor like some wild thing, keeping her visor down as her green eyes searched for movement. She found it. Shaking her staff so it rattled she ducked and scrambled up a tree as the Nightmare blasted fire into the trees. She then scrambled through the branches looking for the spy. Bronze armour plates, a strange helmet with a feathery brush atop it, sandals... "Roman" She hissed and she jumped down to run for Sparky.

>She had to get him. She did not know how the Roman had gotten here, but even she was not such a fool as to take on a Roman, where there was one, there would be more. She heard Furious roar again and froze.
"Furious!" She gasped.

>"Halt! You there!" Damn, she'd been seen! She began running for the

mountains with ease, years of living beside dragons and training aiding her flight through the trees. But the Roman still followed her. She finally found herself at the base of the mountains, surrounded by dizzyingly high rocks, smooth enough that she couldn't scramble up them.
"I said stop!" The Roman yelled finally catching up, holding a rather broad wide sword up at her. She crouched again, placing her staff gently on the ground, her eyes watching him all the time. He couldn't be any older than Finn. "How did you get here Barbarian? We thought this place was uninhabited, so talk boy!"

>"Boy!" She shrieked laughing, she'd left her skirt in the saddle bags. "Do not insult me in such a way Roman!" She laughed standing up and carefully removing her helmet, letting her blonde braid swing over her shoulder.
"You're a girl." The Roman said in surprise.

>"Wrong again, I am not a girl. I am a storm with skin." There was a shriek and Sparky landed beside her, crackling with lightning. The Roman recoiled and her eyes glinted dangerously. "Now tell me Roman, what have your people done with the great dragon Furious?"<p>

And I'm going to leave you hanging for a while I think. I'm actually pretty excited about the upcoming chapters. Feel free to ask about the new characters or suggest theories. But I may not be revealing anything!

32. Chapter 32

Well here we go... The beginning of the big bits I'm excited about!

"You are crazy."

>"I'm a Viking, we are crazy now keep walking."
"No I mean seriously crazy. Like, going to get yourself killed crazy."

>"Yeah what else is new? Move."
"You are going to get yourself killed."

>"I'm pretty sure that's in my job description, it's an occupational hazard now I said MOVE!"
"They are going to tear you apart. And when they find your precious dragon they're going to tear him to pieces too." She hooked his neck with her staff and shoved him against a tree.

>"They're not going to touch him. I won't let them."
"You won't have a choice."

>"That's what you think." She growled.
"Ok, you're choking me"

>"Shame,"
"You need me..."

>"Do I really? I mean, I can summon any dragon to my side at will... What do I really need you for?" She asked pressing the staff harder against his neck.
"I can... get you...under...unseen...ach..."

>"Pathetic." She snorted removing the staff and stepping back "Now shut up and move. Try any funny business and I will kill you. Got that Zander?"
"It's Alexander, not Zander. And not Alex either."

>"Whatever Alex."
"I just said..."

>"Shut it!"
"But..."

>"Shut it, I'm trying to listen."
"Listen to wha..." She covered his mouth with her hand and closed her eyes as she strained to hear.

>"He's hurt. I swear to Odin I'm going to make your people pay for

his every cry."
"What's the deal with this dragon anyway? You never really explained."
>"I don't have to explain myself to you."
"I was only asking..."

>"Furious is special. And he is more powerful than you realise."
"Alexander, where are you?" Voices echoed through the trees.
>"That's my companions, they're looking for me." He hissed at her.
"Really? I had no idea. You, don't go, anywhere." She growled shoving him back.
>"If I don't... They'll keep searching."
"I don't care. You're taking me down there to free Furious."

"If I don't go over to them..."
>"You are not going. You can see your little friends after you take me to Furious!"
"But..."
>"Alexander?"
"Don't..."
>"I'm over here!" He called out suddenly and she hit him in the stomach with her staff.
"You son of a half troll! You said you wouldn't hand me over!" She yelled hitting him repeatedly
>"You left me no choice!" He snapped back, laughing slightly to try and look better as his friends came over.
"Woah, a barbarian!" They laughed
>"A really small one!"
"And female! How pathetic!" She turned on the spot, swinging her staff around and hitting each of them several times with it.
>"Call me pathetic! You Romans are pathetic and stupid! You are the barbarians and you are useless!"
"Oh really? If we're so useless how did you get yourself captured?"
>"I did not get captured!"
"Sure looks that way to me!"
>"Nice catch Alexander, she's a feisty one isn't she? Not bad to look at either. Might make a nice little trophy slave. What do you think?" Alexander knew that was a bad thing to say to the girl. She glared, her eyes narrowed and she spun the staff over, clubbing his companion on the helmet with the bludgeon boulder end of her staff. He collapsed to the ground with a resounding thump. The others all stopped to stare.
"Anyone else think I make a nice trophy?!" She snapped, holding the staff up ready to use again.
>"How did you catch this thing Alexander?!"
"He did not catch me! I cannot be caught!"
>"So why are you stuck surrounded by us with nowhere to run?"
"I'm here to take back what you took!"
>"We've taken nothing from you barbarians!" She froze again and then growled. Growled? She actually growled and snorted. She turned around and glared at him again.
"Where is he?!"
>"Where's who, what is she talking about Alexander?"
"You shut up! I wasn't speaking to you!" She snapped.
>"I only asked..."
"You want to join your friend on the floor?" She snarled "Now Zander, where is he?"
>"I told you not to call me that."
"Eurgh! Forget it, I don't need you! I'll find him myself! Now get out of my way you pathetic worms!"

>"You aren't going anywhere." One of the two still standing said grinning toothily.
"Just try and stop me."
>"It'll be easy,"
"Hadrian, seriously... I don't advise..."

>"You've clearly never battled with a Viking."
"Vikings are pathetic. Especially the females." Julius laughed.
>"Take that back." She growled.
"Why should we? You are pathetic"

>"We'll see if you're still saying that when I have your guts spilled out on the ground!" There was an ear-splitting roar and Alexander and the Roman boys all shook but she stayed standing firm, eyes widened.
"That stupid dragon! When are they going to cut it's spark out?!" Hadrian asked
>"What?!"
"Bad move bad move." Alexander muttered.
>"Cut it's spark out."
"NO! Furious!"
>"Who is Furious?"
"Furious is the dragon you monsters are going to massacre!" She shrieked "Now get out of my way!"
>"She wants to protect the dragon! The vicious beast!" Julius laughed.
"She wants to save the monster!"
>"If I wanted to save a monster I wouldn't be about to kill you."
"What?"
>"She's calling you a monster." Alexander explained.
"The barbarian is calling me a monster?"
>"I am NOT a barbarian!"
"ALEXANDER!"
>"Oh no, oh no no no...My father..."
"We're over here! Your son caught himself a pretty little barbarian."
>"I'm not a pretty little barbarian!"
"What... Who is this?" His father stomped over , he was the image of a Roman soldier, tall and bold as brass.
>"Father..."
"Well captured son. Bring her back to the camp boys. She might prove a useful source of information."
>"I will NOT give up information."
"We'll see about that." Julius and Hadrian grabbed an arm each but Alexander shoved them back taking her arm and handing the staff to them.
>"I'll take her. I caught her." She glared at him but he shot her a warning glance as he dragged her back towards the Roman camp. It took a few minutes to walk back to the camp. She stayed fairly silent for most the walk, speaking only to mutter a few Viking curses at them. Then the camp came into view. Her eyes darted around rapidly searching for the dragon she was desperate to save.
"In there. Put her in chains, I've got questions."
>"Try it and I'll kill you."
"Dream on little princess."
>"I'm no princess."
"Where are you from barbarian?"
>"I will not say. I'll not betray my tribe!"
"Let me make one thing perfectly clear, I will find out where you are from and I will destroy your precious tribe."
>"We are stronger than you believe we are. You cannot defeat us!"
"Then what is there to fear from telling me?"
>"I'm no traitor. I know better than to mess with Romans!"
"Rightly so."
>"Did your Daddy tell you to stay away from us big bad Romans?" Julius mocked.
"My father might have suggested not messing with you."
>"And you always do what Daddy says."
"If I did everything my father said I would not be here at all!" She spat.
>"I bet you're Daddy's little princess!"
"I told you I am not a princess!"

"Enough! Who is your father girl?"
>"A far greater man than you." She spat. He leaned in close and stared at her, his gaze was stone cold and Alexander knew that gaze, it made him recoil, but she never even flinched. She just stared right back. He waved a hand dismissing them all. Even Alexander knew better than to disobey. He left the tent and walked cautiously to the large tent where the dragon was chained...<p>

"You bear the mark of a dragon upon your armour."
>"Oh well spotted. Hundreds of Viking tribes have dragons as their

emblem."
"Then which tribe is this the emblem of?"
>"You think I'm that stupid? I told you, I am not giving up my tribe!"
"Give them up or you die!"
>"Then I die! I will not give up my tribe! My father taught me, a chief protects his own!"
"You are too small to be a chief."

>"But I can protect my own whilst my chief is not there to do it!"
"Then you will die!"
>"I will gladly die to protect my own! But not before I free the dragon you have captive!"
"Ah, you are one of those. You protect the dragons."
>"Damned right I do. There are several tribes who protect dragons now."
"So I have heard. Well, he who lives by the dragon, must also die by the dragon. Come meet our latest trophy. I warn you, it has quite the attitude problem."
>"You shot him down, I'm hardly surprised." She growled. He dragged her to her feet and across the camp, shoving her down onto her knees just inside another tent. A ringing rang in her head and she looked up into the glowing yellow eye of Furious.<p>

"Furious!" She exclaimed.
>"_Child, how did you come to be captured?" _He replied inside her head but she replied out loud. _
>"Furious! I came here to find you! I heard you crying from back home!"
>"_Child, you ought not to have risked yourself! You are meant for more."
>"But you needed me, you know it."
>"Are you talking to that thing?"
"Shut up! Furious, are you hurt at all?"
>"_I have a small injury to my side but I shall survive, so long as I can get out of here. These men are monsters."
>"They want to take your spark! But I won't let them! I won't let them hurt you!" She yelped as she was dragged back away from Furious.
"No! Let me go! Let go of me you steaming heap of dragon..."

>"Father! There's a dragon attacking the camp! It set fire to your tent!" Alexander yelled running in. The other Romans froze suddenly and threw her down again running out to check. Alexander ran over and unlocked her chains.
"What are you...?"
>"Shush, if you're going to get out of here, it's now or never."
"Why are you helping me?" She asked standing up as if nothing had happened. She'd suffered worse.

"Because well, frankly, you scare me a little. And you have an odd amount of guts for a little person. Plus I have no doubts that you will kill me with your dragon, or bare hands." He said picking up her staff and throwing it to her. She stared at him stunned.
>"If they realise you helped me escape..."
"They'll kill me, yeah. I'll be alright."
>"But..."
"Don't worry, just get out of here." She paused and then she let out a shriek. It was the same awful noise she made to call her dragon earlier. It was only a moment before he swooped in, followed by half the Roman legion. She shoved Alexander aside and crouched low, the dragon swooping down behind her as she snatched her sword.
>"How did you...?"
"That's for me to know. All you need to know is I'm about to blast you to Hel."
>"Fire will not harm us through the armour!"
"Oh shame... He doesn't breathe fire..." She held out her sword. "Light em up boy..."

She said calmly and Alexander watched as lightning blasted the soldiers. "Alright, Furious, Sparky is going to hit the chains... Sparky!" Another blast and a clash of metal on metal and the dragon Furious rose up like the huge beast he was. "Let's get out of here!"

>"Kill that little barbarian!"
"Sparky! Up!" She jumped onto his back as he took off and Alexander had to admire her skill.
>"TAKE HER DOWN!" She suddenly froze on the dragon's back, he watched as if in slow motion as she suddenly fell from the dragon.
"NOOO!" he yelled

When she heard those words it was like her nightmares coming back to haunt her. She heard those same words... as if from a lifetime ago...

>"_Sparky come on boy, let's show them!"
>_"__TAKE HER DOWN!"__
>_"__CAMI! NO!"
>"Look out!" She cried as she and Sparky came crashing down onto the ice.
"Dragon Rider... You will die today!"
>"Not if I take you down first!"
"No dragon can resist the alpha, watch as your precious dragon abandons you. You are nothing without him."
>"Sparky would never leave me!"
"Let's just see shall we?" She'd watched in horror as Sparky flew above her, eyes slits, he didn't respond when she cried out to him. "You are pathetic. You are weak..." She ran at him, sword held high and with one arm he knocked her aside as if she were a fly. He stepped over her, one foot crushing on her ribcage as he raised his spear up to finish her.

>"Camicazi! No! Leave her alone!"
"Dragon Master..."
>"Daddy! Daddy no!"
"Face me like a man, let her go. She's a child!"
>"I care not if she is a child. She will die."
"Then I guess I'll have to kill you first."
>"Daddy! Daddy don't!"
"Toothless, blast him off her bud."
>"You think you can..." A blast and a weight lifted from her chest and someone scooped her up and carried her away.
"Stay here!" Her dad's frightened voice ordered._

_ " __No, Daddy!"
>_"__Dad, you can't go back there!" Finn exclaimed holding onto her arms.
>"I'll be back for you both, I promise. Just keep each other safe."
"Daddy!"
>"I promise."
"But you said we can't always keep our promises!" She cried. He kissed her head.
>"I'll do all I can to come back to you. I love you both."

_She watched fearfully as her Dad challenged Drago, she felt safe and reassured, Toothless could take him! Then Toothless turned... She saw the look as he advanced towards her father.
>_"__NO! DADDY!"
>"Toothless, stop, snap out of it bud!"
"HICCUP!"_

_ " __Grandpa!" Finn yelled
>_"__Dad no!" There was a blast and Camicazi screamed.
>She was falling, she was hardly even aware of it until she heard Alexander scream. She let out a couple of calls and other dragons flew in attacking the camp and she crashed onto the back of Furious.

>"Furious! You saved me! I thought you promised you'd never save a human again?"
_"__You child, are forcing me to make an exception. You saved me, I save you."
>"Let's get out of here! Sparky!" She leaped onto his back and dived down to the camp again.
>"Come with me!" She called out to Alexander, holding out her hand
"What?"
>"They will kill you!"
"Won't your people kill me?"
>"If we can accept a former dragon trapper who sold out my mother to a villain who killed my grandfather, we can accept you." He looked around. His father was screaming "TRAITOR" at him. "Come with us. Come on Alex, come with me!" With a final glance he grabbed her hand and let her pull him up onto the back of her dragon and soar off into the night...<p>

****Do tell me what you think!****

33. Chapter 33

"No one has seen her all day."
>"Not since her yelling match with her Dad anyway."
"I heard the Meathead's were trying to draw up a contract between her and Thuggory."
>"No wonder she ran. Can you imagine Camicazi approving of that?"
"Hardly. But she and Sparky took off and no one knows where they are."
>"Hiccup expected her back at least a couple of hours ago. Do you think she's been hurt?"
"Camicazi? No chance, more likely she's run away as a sign of formal protest."
>"You think she'd do that?"
The villagers were all discussing Camicazi's sudden flight. They all knew Hiccup was pacing his house waiting anxiously for her return. The only reason he'd not gone after her yet himself was Astrid had told him it would likely make matters worse, that she'd be home soon. But as the hours wore on, even Astrid was looking more and more concerned.
>It wasn't the first time Camicazi had disappeared off. After Stoick's death and the final battle of the alphas, Camicazi and Sparky had vanished for a couple of days. Hiccup had been beside himself, searching ever last inch of neighbouring islands before a huge lightning storm cut the search short. She'd turned up the following day, soaked but safe. She told them she and Sparky had settled in a cave on an island to wait out the worst of the storm. Hiccup had grounded her but not for long, he was just relieved to have her back safe after all that had happened. The tribes people were starting to wonder if a repeat could be expected.
"Ach, she's just like her dad was at her age." Gobber said hobbling over to join the discussion. "He ran off the day his father told him 'e wanted ta make 'im chief. He flew off and only came back because 'e and Astrid ran into trouble."
>"But Hiccup took up the mantle. He knew it was his job. His responsibility."
"Hiccup learned who he was and what he wanted. He found his mother and he married Astrid and became chief just before Finn turned up. Hiccup always knew he'd be chief one day."
>"And Camicazi really never expected this?"
"Course she didn't." Gobber laughed. "That girl spent thirteen years with Berserkers, that was the last thing she was going ta learn. She's a fighter and dragon trainer first. She's worse than her mother for being a domesticated woman. Camicazi will fight this as long as she can."
>"I think she learns too much from Tuff." Fishlegs

commented.
"What've I done?" Tuff protested.
>"You never settled either! Cami clearly learns it from you!"
"Enough!" Valka said as she approached. "Camicazi is still young. She may be growing up, but these are things she hardly even expects to see from Finn who is three years older and having to consider such things. Until he has to make such decisions, she will not."
>"How's Hiccup doing?" Gobber asked
"It's hard to tell if he's more upset or annoyed. He's pacing and muttering and constantly changing between ceremonial dress and his flight suit. If she's not back soon..." Valka was cut off by a sudden cry from Gustav up on the tower watch.
>"Up there! She's back!"<p>

Alexander watched the ocean unfold beneath them. He still couldn't quite believe what was even happening. Camicazi, that's what she'd told him her name was, had spoken very little on their journey. She'd told him her name and given perhaps the briefest description of herself and her home he'd ever heard. They'd flown with the dragon Furious for a short while and then he'd left for another island. Camicazi had said she'd visit him there soon. After that, she'd fallen silent for the rest of the flight. He sighed. She seemed so comfortable up here on Sparky's back. She flew with ease as if she did this every day. Maybe she did. She hadn't exactly been clear. He spotted another island on the horizon, he assumed they'd pass this one too but the dragon suddenly rumbled and she spoke for the first time in a while.

>"Easy boy... I know. I feel it too."
"Feel what?"
>"Oh I'm so dead. I am so dead. Do you think they've seen us yet? Oh Thor they have... Someone is walking up to the house."
"Who's walking where?" She suddenly turned around on the saddle to face him.

>"Alright Zander."
"Alexander."
>"Whatever, just listen up and listen good." She instructed. Her face was serious, he could see that since she'd stowed her helmet away in a saddle bag. "When we land, I'm going to push you off and Sparky is going to hide you under his wing. Do not move from there or make a sound. Understood?"
"Ok but I thought you said..."
>"I have to explain things first. They won't accept you until they know the full story, so just go with it ok? We should be fairly safe landing at the village centre, keeping close to the cliffs; they shouldn't be able to smell you..."
"You guys smell people out?"

>"Not the people you mutton-head! The dragons! With tracking dragons on the island, no one can hide. And with dragons like Stormfly and Skullcrusher, if you're upwind of them, you'll be found before you can say dragon."
"Oh right..."

>"Let me talk to everyone before I reveal you to them ok?"
"Alright... Is there anything else I should know before we land?"

>"Yeah... My alpha, he'll protect me at all costs, don't make him mad."
"Alpha? You mean your chief?"

>"No I mean Alpha, dragon alpha. But yeah my chief will too so don't make him mad either. I'm surprised he hasn't come looking for me yet."
"Bit personal for a chief isn't it?"

>"What..."
"Camicazi!"

>"Oh Thor's underwear... They've seen me. Alright, just go with it ok?" They swooped down and before they landed Alexander tumbled to the ground and was covered over with a wing, watching as two fur

lined boots leapt down onto the ground.
"Camicazi!" Several voices called. She was pretty popular by the looks of things. "Are you alright?!"

>"I'm fine, honest."
"Where have you been?"

>"Yeah about that... I need to..." There was a loud screeching call and Sparky dipped his head and everyone around froze as a black dragon landed in front of them. Even Alexander flinched. The dragon had huge green eyes that were narrowed, blue glowing along it's spines and from it's flared nostrils. Camicazi froze too, then to his surprise, she sank to her knees and dipped her head too. The dragon stopped growling and it's eyes softened. Camicazi stood up again.
"Hey Toothless. Did I scare you? I'm sorry bud. Did they call you down here?" She asked scratching the dragon affectionately. Maybe that was the alpha.

>"No I did." Camicazi jumped back as a tall figure slid from the dragon's back. Alexander hadn't even noticed anyone was riding it. This had to be the chief, but he was rather smaller than Alexander had expected. He'd always thought Viking chiefs were huge hulking great men with big bushy beards! This chief was slim, tall and without the beard.
"I err... Just give me a chance to explain..." She stuttered slightly. Alexander was surprised she looked nervous.

>"Please," The chief said waving a hand casually, his eyes narrowed and brows furrowed with anger. "Explain."
"Explain... Right. Ok so Sparky and I took a flight..."

>"Really? I had no idea you took a flight. That is totally reassuring." He said sarcastically
"If you'd let me finish!"

>"Hiccup? What... Cami!" A woman said jumping swiftly from the back of a dragon just like Camicazi did. She had blonde hair that tumbled down as her fur hood fell back. "Camicazi where in the name of Odin have you been?!" She yelled
"I was about to explain!" Camicazi snapped back

>"Then please do!"
"Ok, but before I do is there anyone else who needs to be present for this story?" She asked sarcastically.

>"Enough with the cheek young lady!" The chief, Hiccup said.
"Well then can I explain please?" The chief waved a hand casually again. "Ok, so Sparky and I took a flight... I was stressed and annoyed so we were going to take a lap around Badmist island..."

>"Camicazi, that's a two hour flight at most!" Hiccup interrupted.
"Let me finish! We were going to take a flight around Badmist... but then... Ok I need to explain something before I continue."

>"Camicazi..." He said warningly.
"Just hear me out! It was right after grandpa died... When Sparky and I disappeared for a few days... We encountered a ..."

>"Oh Camicazi... What did you do?! You said you just settled in a cave out of the storm!"
"We did! Honest, we did settle in a cave... But something was already in there... It was a dragon. He's different to the others though. He can talk."

>"He talks?"
"Sort of, it's inside your head. He speaks through your mind. Anyway, he didn't like me being there too much, then he saw Sparky and he told me that he'd come far to find some special human to fight beside in some great war. And to cut a long story short he eventually decided it must mean me. He left after that, he comes from further north if you can believe that's possible, but he said he'd be back. Anyway, we were about to fly to Badmist, when I heard him cry. That torturous scream... That horrid noise they made when they sang the song after grandpa died... It physically hurt... I

couldn't ignore that. And I know you wouldn't have been able to either!" She snapped pointing at him.

>"Alright, I understand. So you wanted to help the dragon."
"He's called Furious. The noise was coming from Isle of Doom..."

>"Cami, that's an uninhabited island full of wild dragons!"
"Exactly! I can handle wild dragons! I can handle them just as well as grandma, or you... I figured it was safe, but Furious isn't the kind of dragon who can easily be hurt so I decided to be cautious just in case there were people who'd shot him down. So we landed and Sparky flew ahead to check Mount Doom and I started scouting through the forests. There were people there. I spotted one of them. A Roman."

>"A Roman?! Cami! Did your experience with Drago teach you nothing?!"
"It was different! I knew better ok?! I was going to leave, but then I heard Furious again and the Roman spotted me, he chased me. But I can move through the trees like a Timberjack! He couldn't keep up..."

>"So why so late?"
"Because I kind of got cornered, but I beat the stuffing out of him and he agreed to help me free Furious. So he snuck me into the camp..."

>"You went into the camp?!"
"Would you let me finish! He snuck me in, no one saw me as we freed Furious. But they saw him. They called him a traitor and tried to attack him... But Furious broke free buying him some time and we were able to escape..."

>"Well that's a relief." The woman said.
"Hang on Astrid, what happened to the Roman?"

>"Oh him... Yeah... Well the other Romans tried to kill him; he's only about Finn's age."
"Camicazi... What did you do?"

>"I err... I may have rescued him..."
"You did what?!"

>"They'd have killed him! I couldn't just leave him there to die! He saved me!"
"Cami..." Hiccup groaned exasperated.

>"What? He could have handed me over, but he didn't, thanks to him we escaped! Those monsters were going to cut out Furious' spark!"
"What?"

>"His spark, they were going to cut out what gives him his fire, he'd still live but he'd never breathe fire again."
"That's barbaric."

>"Exactly. He saved Furious from that. I couldn't leave him there to die!"
"What did you do with him after you rescued him Camicazi?"

>"Well I... I brought him back here."
"You did what?!"

>"Well I just figured if we could accept Eret into our tribe, we could at least try and accept Alexander!"
"Alexander?"

>"It's his name, I know, it's weird. But I figured we could give him a chance..."
"No... I will not risk my people, my family. A chief protects his own."

>"He saved me!"
"And you saved him! The debt is settled. He cannot stay here! That is my final word!"

>"Since when do you turn away someone in need of help!?"
"Since the last one tried to kill me!"

>"That was me in case you forgot!" She snapped and everything went silent. Alexander peered out cautiously from under Sparky's wing, still staying hidden though. "I was the last stray who came here in need of help. I was the one who tried to kill you."
"That was different... You did not know."

>"That didn't matter at first! I was still a threat, I still came here with one thing on my mind and that was it. To kill you and bring havoc to Berk. You gave me a chance anyway. You offered me a chance to be a good person. I did not take it and you had no choice but to exile me."
"As I said, it was a different matter. I will not risk

a Roman being among my people."

>"Why can he not have a chance?"
"That is my final word Camicazi. He gets no chance, he has no place here."

>"I don't know who that is speaking, but he sounds like Dagur." She said in a hushed tone.
"Camicazi!" The blonde woman snapped glaring at her.

>"I said it. That's the sort of thing Dagur would say. Then he'd beat me for bringing Alex here."
"You know I would never..." Hiccup began.

>"I know you wouldn't. But that doesn't sound like you. My father never turns away someone in need. And he always gives people a chance, he gives them more than one chance." Alex froze. Father? The chief? Oh boy was he in trouble.
"And it has cost him before."

>"Do you not trust my judgement?"
"I will not risk you or anyone else!"

"I trust him!"

>"Camicazi this is not up for discussion! He is not staying!"
"Why not?!"

>"Because..."
"Because what?!"

>"Enough Camicazi! I am your father and your chief. I've made my decision. It is final!"
"Well I'm electing to ignore it! If you can allow Eret a chance you can let Alexander!"

>"You know she may have a point there Hiccup, why not give the lad a chance..." a tall man with blue stripes tattooed on his chin and black hair tied behind his head piped up.
"Eret, now is not the time."

>"Sorry Hiccup."
"See! Even Eret agrees! Give Alex a chance! I'm not saying you have to induct him into the tribe, just give him a chance to prove he can be trusted!"

>"Camicazi!"
"A chance! Just give him a chance! Please!" Hiccup gave a frustrated snort of air through gritted teeth as he looked away slightly from his daughter. She just stared right back.

>"Fine... I'll give him a chance, but I have several conditions."
"Ok, understood." She nodded eagerly.

>"Where is he?" She gestured to Sparky who unfurled his wing allowing Alexander to stand up. Everyone stared at him and whispered.
"Alexander, this is the chief of Berk, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the third, my Father. Dad, this is Alexander of Rome." The chief stared him down. Though not a huge man, Alexander felt very small under that gaze. It was more unnerving than his own father's gaze.

>"My conditions..." He said looking back to Camicazi "He spends tonight in the cells, after that Eret, he's your responsibility."
"What? Mine?"

>"Yes, yours. Camicazi, you are not to go anywhere alone with him. Am I being clear?"
"Yes dad."

>"And he goes nowhere unescorted. Are those things perfectly understood?" Again Camicazi nodded. "And you young lady, are grounded."
"WHAT?! Dad, no!"

>"Yes... This is not the first time you've flown off like this, and you have not been present on time for anything lately because you've been flying."
"Dad! The races are this week!"

>"If you stick to the rules and following the grounding then you may race on Freya's day."
"But Dad I..."

>"That is final Camicazi. Eret, take the boy to the cells.

Camicazi..."
"I want to see him to the cells."

>"Fine," The woman, Astrid said, "but you are to come straight back

to the house. Understand?"
"Yes Mum."

>"Good, then you may go with Eret. Hiccup, we'll see her back at the house."<p>

"He doesn't like me at all does he?"

>"Nah, it's not that." Camicazi said practically skipping along beside him, the man Eret rolling his eyes at her. "He's just really protective..."
"With good reason!" Eret butted in "This girl is capable of getting into trouble pretty much anywhere! I swear, she rivals the twins with that capability!"

"It's not like I mean to! Trouble just sort of follows me..."

>"And that's one reason he gets so protective. You're his daughter, of course he will be. And after everything that has happened, I can't say I blame him. Between Dagur and Drago... I'm amazed he even lets you walk around without an armed guard."
"I can handle Dagur!" She snapped suddenly "Just give me time and I'll be able to stop Drago too..."

>"Listen kid, I'm saying this out of affection these days, don't mess with Drago. You know what he's capable of as well as I do. Toothless may be alpha now but Drago is still a madman."
"What... who is Dagur? And who is Drago?" Alexander asked

>"Never mind that now." Camicazi said waving his question aside just like Hiccup. She was very like him Alexander noticed. "Eret, does he really have to stay in the cells?"
"I'm not going to argue with your dad and if you want to race on Freya's day I suggest you don't either!"

>"Race?"
"Dragon racing!" Camicazi piped up suddenly much more cheerful "It's our favourite sport! We have the annual races, but we race for fun all year round and when we have visitors we often do a bit to put on a bit of a show, sometimes we'll do tournament fights too, the other tribe can get involved with that too. When it comes to racing, I'm undefeated!" She beamed smugly.

"You do have the fastest dragon..."

>"Eret, I could beat them on a Gronckle with my eyes closed and one hand behind my back."
"What about in the fighting?" Alexander asked.

>"In the youths, undefeated!"
"She has her mother's fighting skill, her father's ability with a blade and all the cunning of a dragon. She was trained hard but she doesn't half earn her title." Eret said as she beamed still more. "Alright, here's the cells. Camicazi, you better go back now before he comes looking for you. You're in enough trouble as it is. I'll finish settling him."

>"But..."
"Go now and you can join us both for breakfast. I'm not making the lad starve, I'll fetch him early and he can have breakfast with me."

>"You mean it?!" She asked beaming at him. "I can?!"
"Yes, before you go do whatever it is you're supposed to do to make up for earlier."

>"If you're talking about Thuggory..." She said darkly.
"Discuss it with your dad! Now go!"

>"Eurgh! Fine! I'll see you at breakfast Eret. Later Zander! Sleep well! Don't let the terrors bite!" She laughed. Alexander turned to Eret a look of panic on his face.
"Terrors and biting?"

>"She's kidding around, the Terrors don't bite much. Except Pain... But he's always at Snotlout's. They don't sleep in the cells anyway. Most live with Gothi."
"These names all sound weird. Hiccup, Astrid, Eret, Camicazi, Gothi, Snotlout..."

>"No weirder than yours. Alexander? What kind of name is that?"
"It's Roman!"
>"And our names are native to our lands. Each to their own. Right, you're to stay here tonight, chief's orders..."
"He's not what I expected a Viking chief to look like..."
>"Well Hiccup is a bit different. His father was a classic Viking. I barely knew him though."
"What happened?"
>"He was killed. Last year, Drago came and war broke out. The first alpha was killed and the replacement took control, no dragon can resist the alpha." He said sadly. "It put Toothless under control at Drago's order and turned him on Hiccup."
"So wait, the dragon he rode in...?"
>"That's Toothless. They've been an inseparable pair since Hiccup was fifteen. Kind of like Cami and Sparky from what I hear. But she found Sparky when she was only seven."
"But Toothless tried to kill him?"
>"His dad got in the way. Toothless killed him. Hiccup eventually got Toothless out of the alpha's control and Toothless challenged the alpha and won. That's how we got to now. There's still chunks of ice and a few damaged statues, but Berk is mostly repaired."
"So, Hiccup trusts Toothless even though Toothless killed his Dad?"

>"Toothless didn't mean to. It was heartbreaking. Drago damned near killed half his family. "Astrid doesn't take things lying down and she wasn't afraid of Drago. Got the lot of them into trouble. Course I sold them out but I also helped free them after Drago turned on me. So he nearly killed her. Finn stayed out of trouble, that's his son. Finn's around your age I'd say. Hiccup's mother nearly got herself killed by Drago too, then of course Camicazi had to challenge him. Every bit the stubborn boar-headed Viking her parents are, nearly got herself killed. She would have too if Hiccup hadn't intervened." He sighed heavily. "She blames herself. Poor thing. Because Drago had her at his mercy, her dad intervened to save her, then Toothless got turned and her grandfather jumped between them. She thinks it's her fault. Wouldn't have changed a thing. Would have happened no matter what. Drago is like that."<p>

"That's awful. Is that why she's like she is?"
>"Huh? Oh what the tough aggressive thing? Nah, that's just how she is. But after being raised by Berserkers it's not surprising. I've only encountered them a couple of times since I settled and I'll tell ya, she's surprisingly sane for having spent thirteen years there."
"Thirteen?"
>"Yeah, she was lost to Hiccup as a babe. Rescued and raised on Hysteria by the chief's wife there. She found Sparky at the age of seven but suffered at Dagur's hand until she was thirteen when she was sent here to kill Hiccup."
"But he's her dad!"
>"She didn't know that. She'd been raised on lies. She didn't know who her real family were. She came here to kill Hiccup but couldn't do it in the end. She damned near killed Dagur and his son though. And they damned near killed her. She's suffered a lot over her life. It's why she's as tough as she is. It takes a lot to break her. She never talks about life before Berk but we all know. She's got plenty of scars, most from getting between the whip and Sparky. She's a warrior and very like her parents. I certainly wouldn't pick a fight with Astrid or Hiccup these days, I know what they can do. And she is them in miniature."
"She's certainly something else. I always thought it was weak and desperate of Viking men to allow women to fight..."
>"Then Cami battled her way into your life."
"Pretty much. She's

dangerous. I've seen that much already."

>"Yeah that she is."
"I have to ask, has she ever killed anyone?" Eret stopped and looked around before dropping his voice to barely above a whisper.

>"No one talks about it, and no one knows for sure just how old she was the first time she took a life. All we do know is that when she fought on Berk for the first time at thirteen, to protect Hiccup... She injured and or killed around twenty grown men. Singlehandedly, and all at once. She could have killed Dagur and his son too, but she didn't stoop so low."
"Now I'm really scared of her." Eret laughed.

>"I'd consider you a fool if you weren't. But she doesn't seem to want you harmed. Seemed rather fond of you. Never seen her defend anything except a dragon like that before."
"Should I be even more scared?"

>"Nah, Camicazi isn't interested in settling or dating. She just obviously thinks you're interesting. She likes to play with fire that girl, I'd say you're her new challenge."
"Great. Just great."

So there we have it. The start of something very new for the Vikings and Eret just got himself a protÃ©gÃ©e. Tell me what you think :)

34. Chapter 34

There was fire. Lots of fire. A flash of silver, a blast of light, a blur of purple. Sword hot sword, metal on metal. People screamed, they cried. Too much was happening and he couldn't focus on any one feature.

His eyes darted over the scene, everything was a blur. Scales could not be distinguished from armour, fire of beasts from fire from torches. Then he saw her, fire in her eyes. Nothing but burning hatred. She was scaled, she was deadly. She swung a sword, the silver blade flashed before him, something seared his face and he screamed.

Alexander woke in a cold sweat and sat bolt upright, a small dragon was thrown from his chest as he did so. It squawked indignantly and hissed. He backed into the corner of his cell, panicked. What had he been thinking?! Helping the Viking girl?! Saving that infernal dragon?! And then he'd come back here with her! Was he out of his mind?!

>"Hello there, how are we doing today?" He looked up and saw the man with the blue tattoos standing outside his cell grinning. Eric? Eren? What was his name again? "Oi! Get out of there!" He called at the small dragon still hissing at him. "Sorry about that, Terrible Terrors. They can be little pests when they want to be." He said smiling. Alexander attempted a nervous smile in return but it came out rather weaker than he would have liked. "Come on; let's get some food inside you. You'll feel a bit better then." And just like that, he unlocked the cell door and let him out. Alexander couldn't decide if this was foolish trust, or a brave attempt at peace and chance.
"What exactly is for breakfast?" He asked.

>"Oh probably fish and eggs. If you'd like we'll get some bread as well and some milk." It was not the feast Alexander was used to, but it was food. So it would do. He was led through the village and he took the opportunity to look and see what it looked like in the

daylight.<p>

All the houses looked small and simplistic and Alexander couldn't work out which was the chief's. Surely his was huge and grand?

>"I'm sure you'll get given a tour later." The man chuckled. What was his name? "This is my place in the village. It's only small because well, it's just me, and I prefer to stay on my boat." He said, gesturing to a very small hut. It wasn't built like the other houses. There was more fabric and sticks. Alexander raised an eyebrow. "Built in the style of my forefathers. I'm not a born Viking. Besides, I tend to live life on my boat." Still feeling somewhat apprehensive, Alexander sat down onto a crate covered with a brightly woven blanket. He kept staring around as the village bustled to life.
When the first dragon let out it's morning cry he jumped right off his seat. The man just laughed.

>"It might take a while, but you get used to that sort of noise. You get used to a lot of noises here on Berk and dragons is a biggun. It's just nice to hear chirps and happy calls rather than pained and distressed." He said as he cooked over a fire. "Course there are other common noises too like..."
"...AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT YOU LOUSY LONG FACED..."

"WOULD YOU JUST SHUT UP FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE?! AND GIVE ME BACK MY SHIELD BEFORE I SHOVE THAT SWORD OF YOURS UP YOUR..."

"ENOUGH!" Alexander stared at him again, he was chuckling.

>"Like that. That'll be the Haddock's getting up... Never used to be that loud apparently. Teenagers... Honestly." He chuckled again and offered a flagon of milk to Alexander who accepted it, sniffing in case of poison which only made him laugh harder. "I haven't poisoned it lad! She'd skin me alive if I tried!" There was the sound of a door slamming, voices yelling then... "One, two... three." He murmured quietly. The instant he said 'three' a black dragon soared into the skies, it's rider barely visible on his back.
"And there goes Hiccup off to do chief duties... and..." A blue dragon shot off a moment later. "...Astrid going to contain chaos outside of her home and now..." Another bang and two figures came bursting out of the house over-looking the village, both charged part way together before going separate ways. Alexander turned away to begin eating his eggs and drink the milk he'd been given. It definitely wasn't like the food from home, but it was edible and truth be known, he was hungry.

>He'd not long been eating when a small blonde figure leaped up behind him yelling "Surprise!" He was so startled he actually fell to the floor before turning to look at his surprise attacker. She was laughing somewhat manically, holding her stomach and pointing to him as she did so. He glared and straightened up, brushing the dirt from himself.
"You actually fell off your seat!" She laughed. "You actually fell! That was so funny!"

>"Good morning Camicazi" The man said calmly as if this was common-place, which frightened Alexander more than he wanted to admit.
"Morning Eret!" She chirped back. Eret! That was his name! "Alright Zander? How was your night in the cells?" He shot her a glare for the use of the nickname.

>"It was alright I suppose." He grumbled. "Could have been worse but not especially comfortable."<p>

"No kidding! But hey, the cells aren't exactly designed for comfort. Not my favourite place to spend time I have to admit." She said with

a slight shudder.

>"What was the fight about this morning?" Eret asked taking a bite out of some bread. Camicazi rolled her eyes. For the first time Alexander was able to take in her features properly, since it wasn't dark and neither she nor anyone else was trying to kill him. The first thing he noticed, besides the fact that her hair was as rich gold as the most prized treasures in his father's home, was that her eyes were extraordinarily green. They sparkled as if there really was a fire lit up behind them giving fair warning of the dangers of staring at her, you might just get burned, and they were greener than the emeralds on his mother's necklace.
"The usual." She said taking a seat on the crate next to his own. "He misplaced his stupid shield... probably left it in the arena knowing him, too busy running after Buffnut to pay attention to his weaponry or defence." She snorted in disgust. "And of course he blamed me. Like I'd take his stupid shield! So I got mad and he told me he knew full well I could kick his ass any day of the week and well, I'm guessing you heard that." She said with a shrug. She glanced up at him, her eyes narrowing slightly when she caught him staring. "You can sit back down. Odin's beard, Romans!" He sat down and dropped his gaze. He hated to admit it, but Octavias might have had a point about her not being bad to look at... Not in the way he'd meant it of course, a trophy slave... but just... Not unattractive. Of course if he even breathed such an idea she'd probably slice his head clean off, so maybe not quite so attractive.

>"I'm assuming it was your father you told you both to stop?"
"Yeah... Told us we needed to quit fighting, he added a new threat today though..." She stood up and flailed her arms around whilst speaking in a slightly deeper tone to mock her father's. "Camicazi this has got to stop! If you and Finn do not stop fighting, neither of you will race on Freya's day and I mean it!" She slumped. "Course that shut us both up right away. I'm already this close to not being able to race as it is!" As she sat down she threw her hands up in annoyance. Eret was smirking, Alexander had to wonder why.

>"What are your conditions for today then?" He asked and she looked up at him darkly.
"I'm allowed to come here for breakfast, then I'm to go up to the Hall and apologise to Thuggory and his dad before I can do anything else. Provided I'm polite and at least try to be sincere, then I can show Alexander around." She sighed. "Dad won't even let me see Sparky today. He's fed him and everything. I'm banned for the day so I won't be tempted." She slammed down her fist on the crate covered with food. "It's not fair!" She yelled. Alexander made a mental note never to forget she had a temper as fiery as a dragon.

"If you keep to his rules and make nice with Thuggory, you'll be flying again in no time!"

>"A week Eret. A week. That's like..."
"A blink of an eye to your dragon. Sparky will be fine."

>"He'll pine for me! He'll fight them! He'll..."
"He'll not resist his alpha and you should not resist yours either." Eret cut across and she sighed again.

>"I just hate being grounded. I like being up there. Do you think if I was really good I could persuade Dad to take me with him on Toothless later?"
"Only if you were really unbelievably good. Sweet and sincere and polite and did as you were told." That didn't sound too bad to Alexander but she pulled a face.

>"No chance then."
"I'd say not. Maybe later in the week when he's calmed down. You scared him."

>"I know but still..."
"Why've you got to go apologise to Thuggsy?" He asked. Camicazi snorted with laughter and sprayed a mouthful of crumbs everywhere.

>"Thuggsy?! Oh great Odin's ghost! That's funny!"
"She has to apologise to them because..."

>"Don't!" She snapped, suddenly serious and harsh again. She'd stood and was pointing her knife at Eret. "Don't you dare tell him! It's bad enough that most the village is gossiping about it without him knowing too!"
"Cami, calm down! He's going to hear about it eventually..."

>"Are implying that I might, even for a second consider it?!"
"No no no!" He said hurriedly, holding his hands up in surrender and keeping his eyes on the knife in her hand. Alexander didn't understand why Eret didn't just knock it away and restrain her. "I didn't mean that! I just meant someone will eventually mention it within his earshot!"

>"Eurgh. I hate men." She spat sitting back down. This seemed an unfair thing to say. Alexander went to retort despite Eret frantically shaking his head and drawing a line over his throat to suggest he cut it out.
"What? Why do you hate men? What's wrong with us?" The instant he'd asked he regretted it. Her eyes snapped up to him, burning still more brightly, and not in that beautiful enchanting sort of way they had when she laughed... wait why did he notice that? She stood again and stood over him, a look of pure hatred on her face.

>"Why? WHY?! You want to know why I hate men?!"
"Errr actually I changed my mind..." He said in a quiet voice.

>"Because men think they're so powerful! They think they're the stronger sex! Men like to show off their power and pride! They think women can be traded and sold like livestock! They make stupid arrangements and offer a dowry for a bride! They don't care what she wants so long as she'll be a good housewife who provides for him and gives him decent sons or heirs!" She was screaming at him and he couldn't but cower. "They beat anything they consider lesser than them without consideration and they get kicks out of abusing their power! But you want to know why I personally hate them?!" She yelled again, he tried to shake his head but apparently she was going to answer him anyway. "Ever since I was a child men beat me! They hit me and abused me! They beat Sparky and they lied to me! I was nothing but a pathetic little girl to them! And that's what your people think of me too! Some pretty little trophy! Men think they can buy me and I cannot and will not be bought! Men have always controlled everything in my life and I hate it! I hate them! Men are vile and cruel and they don't deserve the women in their lives! They beat them and beat them until they break! I will not break! Men flirt and try to woo and think they can just choose a girl and own her! They think they can take anything and just claim it! I hate them all!"<p>

"Cami..."

>"WHAT?!"
"You don't hate all men..."

>"I do! I hate every last..."
"You love your father." Eret said and she stopped in her raging to look at him. "You love him and you know he's none of those things. You love your brother no matter how much you might fight. You love your uncles, and Gobber... You loved your grandfather." She suddenly seemed to shrink, as if something of the fire was suddenly smothered. "Camicazi, just because there are bad men that you've known in your life, just because men now are making you angry... You know you don't hate us all." Once again she sighed, as if deflated, she sat down again.

"Ok... I hate most men. I like the ones who live on Berk year round. The ones here currently I'm iffy with." Eret grinned.

>"That's fair. You know no one is expecting you to agree right?"
"Good because I'm not. End of discussion. So Alex, what do you think of Berk so far?" He was shocked by the sudden change in her attitude given she'd been yelling at him not two minutes ago.

>"Umm... I think it's very different to home. It's loud and slightly odd. The people are pretty aggressive and you have different ways to us. Very different."<p>

"Perhaps not as different as you think." A softer voice spoke and an older woman with streaks of grey now very prominent in her brown hair. Her eyes were bright, a greyish colour, but there were crows feet and soft wrinkles on her face now.

>"Grandma?" Camicazi looked at her.
"What do you mean we might not be so different?" Alexander asked confused.

>"I mean that exactly as it sounds Alexander. There are of course undeniable differences between our two peoples, but that does not mean by any means, we are completely different, that we share no similarities."
"Ok Grandma, besides being human, what do we have in common with them?" She punctuated the 'we' and 'them' and jerked her thumb to point from herself to Alexander. "They hate dragons, they wear stupid helmets, they wear stupid sandals and armour..."

>"It's not stupid!" Alexander defended
"Their weapons and fighting skills are pretty weird too, their shields are rectangular for Thor's sake!"

>"It makes for a brilliant defence!" He retorted.
"They aren't the best sailors either, the women dress in funny silky dresses, they fight strange animals for fun..."

>"And where Camicazi, is the difference? Some Vikings still hate dragons, Drago, Dagur... And some Vikings cannot sail as well as other tribes, especially those located in the mainland. And to Alexander here, you wear very stupid clothes as well, you fight strange animals for fun, or at least ride them..."
"But none of that makes us similar!"

>"She may have a point there." Alexander said from beside Camicazi.

"I mean, look at us. Camicazi and I could not be more different!"
"In appearance maybe. But your people and ours share common things, like a desire to protect our loved ones, we have rulers and leaders, and warriors, we each ride different animals to battle, we each know how to battle. Children are raised by their parents, you still live in homes, you still eat even if it different to our food. We all do what we must to survive." Camicazi snorted in derision and Alexander privately agreed. The woman, Camicazi's grandmother, just smiled more.

>"Perhaps in time you'll see it. After all Cami, you could not understand why you were so different to the Berserkers..."
"That was different! I was meant to be here! With you and Mum and Dad and Finn and..."

>"She's right. I come from Rome, it's my home and my culture. It's who I am!"<p>

"Your upbringing does not define who you are Alexander. And where you come from does not mean where you belong."

>"Grandma... I belong here on Berk..."
"You belong," She looked at them both "wherever you want to. What matters is not the place, but rather what's in it. Berk was destroyed, but Berk itself, at its heart was not. The people, the life makes it up. You belong with the

things that matter most."

>A whistling of the wind and a black shape flew overhead in a blur. The chief and his dragon.
"Your father belongs on Berk, leading his people, protecting his family... But he belongs with Toothless, in the skies just as much. Like you with Sparky Camicazi."

>"I thought this was about how we are not so different me and Alex." She mumbled watching the dragon fly wistfully.
"It is. But the very fact that you did not let your father banish him when you saved him shows something."

>"I don't like where this is going."
"Compassion. It's human nature."

>"Not all humans." Cami and Alexander said at the same time. They looked at each other and then away.
"Hmm... You're still both just humans. Only your current views limit your similarities." And with that she walked off. They sat in silence for a moment wondering what that was all about.

"Well eat up you two or you'll never get everything done today!" Eret said brightly and they did so.

It wasn't long later that Camicazi was staring darkly across the Great Hall, or Meade Hall, as she told Alexander it was called. There were a lot more Vikings in here and he had to admit it made him feel anxious. Hiccup came over, his face stern as he looked at Camicazi. She scuffed her boot on the floor and avoided looking at him. He took a heavy sigh and his expression softened as he looked at her and spoke gently to her.

>"Cami..." She looked further to the side, still avoiding his gaze. "Cami... I know you're mad at me. I'm just, trying to do what's best for you." She snorted air out of her nose, her teeth gritted as he'd done last night. She really was very like him. Even the eyes he noticed were a perfect match. But her eyes seemed far more beautiful and deadly than her father's. He shook his head lightly. "Camicazi, you know I am. I'm not going to even suggest you go through with this. I know it's not what you want. And in all honesty, it's not what I want either." At this point she finally looked at him, a single blonde eyebrow raised. "I know you're growing up, but you're still my little girl. And having lost you to one tribe for thirteen years..." She looked away with another snort, he gently turned her face back by pinching her chin. "... I'm not sure I'm ready to lose you to another one just yet. Maybe that's selfish, but I'm your father. I'm allowed to feel a little selfish about keeping my baby girl." He smiled at her, a crooked somewhat goofy smile. It was good natured and caring and Alexander felt himself relax. He noticed the corners of her mouth twitch upwards slightly.
"That look might work on mum but it won't work on me." She said, but her voice was light and friendly. He gave a light pout.

>"Damn... I was hoping it would work. If I tried singing really badly would it work?" At this she did laugh.
"Alright, you're forgiven." She chuckled

>"Is my singing that bad?"
"Not as bad as Gobber's" She chuckled and he pulled her into him hugging her tightly, kissing the top of her head. He was surprised to see her hug him back.

>"Well thanks for that. You know I love you baby. I'd never willingly give you up. I'd die before I gave you up." Her face was screwed up slightly as if pained as he said this but she just held him tighter.
"I know. I do know. I love you too Daddy."

>"Come on then, let's get this over with. We'll go and politely decline and apologise for yesterday, you were just in shock." She gave a small nod and walked across the hall with her father by her

side. Alexander watched from beside Eret, trying to make sense of what he'd seen, because his father had never been anything like that. Not ever.<p>

"Ah Hiccup! Camicazi!" Thuggory boomed as they approached. Thuggory Junior flashed her a smile which she did not return. "Come to discuss the contract?" Camicazi went to spit a reply but her dad nudged her ribs lightly and she bit her tongue.

"We have come to discuss the matter yes." He said, but though he kept his tone even, there was a definite edge to it.

>"Well then, let us discuss! Son?"
"Cami, I just want to say that, I will treat you with the utmost respect. I know you are a warrior and I respect you and value your opinion..." _But not enough to ask me what I thought in the first place_ she thought to herself. "... and you should know that I admire you and will always take on board what you say. You and Sparky will always be welcome on Meathead island and you will be able to help us with the dragons and change everything. You'll improve it for the better. With you by my side..."

>"She won't be accepting."
"What?" Both said, it was not harsh... but there was surprise in the tone. "Speaking for your daughter now? I thought she did not allow that."

>"That did not seem to have bothered you much yesterday." Even Cami stared at him for his reply. "She can speak for herself, I was just telling you."
"I see, well. Camicazi?" Thuggory asked. His son looked at her; she hated that look in his eyes, somewhat sad, hurt and disappointed. But she was not soft. It would not get her. She looked up at them, her eyes determined.

>"I won't be accepting. I'm not yet seventeen! I'm not even thinking about settling down! And, I don't want to leave Berk anyway. This is my home. I belong here. And I missed out on it for thirteen years. I'm not ready to go yet. I don't know that I ever will be." She told him calmly, but reasonably.<p>

"But Camicazi... This is a chance for us to..."

>"I don't want to hear it. I made my decision."<p>

"We wouldn't have to get married for ages, you could stay here. After you come of age, then we can think about getting married..."

"No Thuggory. You've been a good friend, but that's not what I want. It's not who I am..."

"If I recall your mother was the same way once."

"Astrid and Camicazi are not the same people. Astrid and I were not married until we were twenty and..."

"She had Finn not long after that if I remember." Hiccup shot Thuggory a glare.

"Astrid and I had been with one another for five years by the time we were married and had our first child. This is different. Camicazi is not even of age yet! She and your son have never seen one another..."

"So we could start..."

"Again! Cutting me out! Is anyone asking my opinion here?!" She

snapped

"You're absolutely right sweetheart, this is about you."
>"Yeah babe, you get a say."<p>

"Don't call me babe!"

"This ridiculous!"

"Yes it is... She's given her answer..."

"But babe..."

"I told you not to call me that!"

"Hiccup? Is everything alright over here?" Astrid asked walking over.

"Mum! Tell them they can't make me start seeing Thuggory! That I don't have to marry him!" Camicazi pleaded grabbing her mother's tunic.

"What? Of course you don't."

"Now Astrid, you know that she..."

"She does not have to enter into this if she isn't ready!"

"Thank you Astrid!"

Eret sighed. Alexander looked up. "Are they... Are they getting married?" He asked. He was surprised, she didn't strike him as that kind. He tried to picture her walking down the aisle in some fancy white gown... It didn't seem quite right, but the image came surprisingly easily to him. But picturing some big butch Viking man waiting for her at the end... that he couldn't see.

"No. Camicazi wouldn't go for it. That's why they're arguing. She doesn't want to but they do. They are trying to arrange a contract. Come on, best go bail them out before Hiccup unleashes Inferno or summons the alpha."

"What's Inferno?"

>"Oh, his sword, its blade sets on fire and blasts. I'm sure you'll see it one day." He followed Eret approaching the bickering families with caution.<p>

"Is everything ok here chief?" Eret asked. All heads snapped towards them. Alexander shifted uncomfortably and edged towards Camicazi.

"Are you alright?" He asked her quietly. She looked at him with surprised green eyes. He couldn't help but be drawn to the gaze.

"I'm ok... Just frustrated."

"I can tell." He shifted on his feet again. The adults were all still arguing; somehow Eret had got involved now too. "You must be really annoyed. Having people try and decide your future must be

irritating."

"It is. I don't like having people decide my life for me..."

"Who's this?"

"Our unexpected visitor. Camicazi rescued him."

"He's dressed like a Roman."

"He is." She spat. "Got a problem with that Thugs?"

"What besides the fact he's a Roman?" He scoffed. "What've I got to have a problem with?" Camicazi rolled her eyes again.

"I came over here to apologise for running off yesterday, I was angry and caught off-guard. I also came to tell you I have no interest in becoming anybody's intended. That's all I have to say. Dad, can I show Alex around now? If Eret accompanies me?" Hiccup glanced at them.

"You'd let her wander off with a Roman?!"

"Eret, would you accompany them both please, at least until someone else can take over. I need to have a discussion with Thuggory here." He said, his teeth gritted. Camicazi's face lit up.

"Sure Hiccup, whatever you need. After you two." Eret said waving a hand.

"Thanks Eret, thank Mum. Thanks Dad." She hugged him briefly and then pulled Alexander by the hand out of the hall.

"You seemed keen to get out of there."

"I promised I'd be polite. That would not last if I stayed. And trust me, when my parents get angry, they're scary. Mum is always scary, because she's a warrior. A fighter. No one messes with her. Dad though, he never gets angry. So when he does, you know about it." She was grinning somewhat.

"And that makes you happy why?"

"Because he's not letting anyone buy me. He's getting really serious and cross for me. It's just nice knowing that your dad loves you that much you know?"

"I cannot really say that I do." He sighed. Eret was walking just a little way behind them. "I mean, you saw what he was like. Do you really think he was ever the loving nurturing kind? I was always just trying to live up to expectations."

"Hey, we've all been there. Tried to uphold someone's expectations. It sucks."

"No more than having people control your life"

"Kind of the same thing isn't it?"

"But my father never tried to sell me."

"Nor did mine, Thuggory tried to buy me."

"I was supposed to be married." He said quietly as they walked over to the cliff edge and over looked the view.

"You were?" She asked surprised. "How old are you anyway?"

"Eighteen. Just."

"So... you've got a girl waiting to marry you back home?"

"Yes... It was a good match." He sighed again.

"You were matched up?"

"Yes. My father is a fine soldier, commanding entire Roman legions. Her family have a title. It made sense to arrange us together."

"You don't sound too excited about it."

"I'm not. I was never especially excited by it, she's a nice enough girl I suppose, very pretty, but I don't feel anything for her. But what am I supposed to do?"

"Help a Viking girl free a dragon, burn down your entire camp and then run away with her?" She suggested with a smirk. He looked at her and he couldn't help but grin.

"Yeah, I guess that works. Got me out of it right?"

"I guess so. But if you're using us as a hide out, you should really try to blend in."

"Fine, just give me something warmer to wear. This stuff is freezing me to death!"

"You came to the archipelago in just that stuff, of course you're cold."

"Are you two alright?" Eret asked.

"Yeah, he's just got cold feet." Camicazi teased. Alexander glared at her for her joke.

"Let's get you some warmer clothes and shoes, and then she can show you around." Eret ignored the joke, not understanding the reference she was making.

"Sounds like a plan."

"I should have some things you can put on for now. Then we'll have to see if any of the lads are any closer in size to you to get you a better tunic. Come on." They followed Eret back to his little hut where he pulled out some furs and boots for Alexander to wear until they could find him something more permanent.

Alexander felt off stripping off his armour so he just stood in his top. He blushed furiously feeling decidedly more naked even though

all he'd lost was his armour. Camicazi giggled slightly and Eret turned her away, for this he was immensely grateful. He pulled on a pair of pants that were far too big for him. Chuckling Eret passed him a belt and a pair of boots. With the belt on and the boots, the pants no longer caused him trouble. He then pulled a fur shrug around his shoulders feeling considerably warmer for it.

"Can I turn around again yet?" Camicazi asked.

"Yeah. Now you can." She turned back to face him and her eyes widened momentarily. The change to more Viking like, or at least more familiar clothing changed everything. He no longer looked quite so stupid. Besides the much shorter hair, he almost looked the part. She had to admit, it was an improvement.

"Suits you." She said

"Really? Was that a compliment?" He asked grinning. She hit his shoulder and he flinched rubbing it "Ow!"

"Shut up!" Eret just rolled his eyes.

"And so it begins" He muttered.

35. Chapter 35

****Just a short one I'm afraid, writers block can hit on specific stories. And I'm afraid I'm struggling to get to where this one needs to be! I will be continuing it of course, it's just a slow process right now, what with uni, work and volunteering as well!****

The village was lively, at least as much as Rome ever had been. Camicazi had showed him a number of different places that he'd already forgotten how to get to, like the forge, and the stables where once again they'd run into her grandmother, Valka. She'd smiled and said "see, not so different at all". Camicazi was now pulling him towards the place she called 'the academy'.

"Are you sure you want to take him in there? And you know you can't see Sparky right?" Eret was saying as they made their way towards this place.

"Yes and yes! He needs to see the academy! It's where I spend most of my time after all! And he can meet the others..."

"Including Finn?"

"Yes, including Finn... And you can go see Sparky for me to tell him I'll see him tomorrow."

"It's up to you Cami."

"I know that!" She said. Finally the academy came into view. Alexander had to admit, it was not quite what he'd expected.

"Welcome to the Berk Dragon Academy!" She said cheerily leading him down to the entrance.

"Finally! I wondered when you'd turn up!" A female voice called as Camicazi entered. She grinned at her friend. "Oooh... Is this the Roman?!"

"Yup, Buffnut, this is Alexander. Alex, this is my friend Buffnut. She's a couple of years older than me. I'm the youngest here." Alexander stepped up to face Buffnut, she was pretty intimidating. Tall, blonde, like Camicazi, but her eyes were grey blue. She didn't have the same beauty that Camicazi did he decided. He instantly tried to cast that thought aside.

>"He's a little weird looking. Who's clothes has he pinched?"
"Eret's. They're a little big on him I admit." She said chuckling lightly. "Miktak, this is Alexander." She said gesturing to a tall skinny blonde boy who absolutely had to be Buffnut's brother. "Alex, this is Buff's brother Miktak." The tall blonde grinned at him and held out a hand to grab his and shake it.

>"Good to meet you! You're one crazy son of a..."
"Mik!"

>"Ok ok, just crazy! You tried to take on this girl!" He gestured to Camicazi. "You tried to take her on, freed a giant dragon and then ran away from your people to face off with our chief and our alpha! You got balls man!" Alexander didn't know quite how to respond. These people were definitely not anything like those back home.
"Errr... thanks?"

>"Miktak you jerk! Can you not clean up after your dragon for once?!" A stocky dark-haired boy yelled coming over. The brother and sister laughed.
"You put dung behind him?"

>"I practically soaked the pen in it, he was going to slip up eventually."
"Rufflout you stink!" Camicazi snapped.

>"Blame them! What're you doing here babe? Thought you were grounded?" She narrowed her eyes.
"Call me babe again and I'll knock out another tooth." She growled.

>"Easy Cami! No need for violence!" A large boy called. He had straw coloured hair and seemed to waddle over.
"It's not violence! It's communication!" she replied with a casual shrug of one shoulder and a flick of her hand.

>"You sound like mum." Alexander stopped looking around when the new boy spoke and walked out of a pen. "Is this him then?" He asked, shrugging a shoulder in Alexander's direction, in one hand he held a short blade, in the other a rag he was using to wipe it clean. This boy was obviously the leader of the others. Tall, thin with reddish hair that waved down around his ears tickling at his shoulders. His eyes were a bright clear blue and there was a faint hint of gingerish stubble on his chin.
"Yeah this is him." She replied. Buffnut's eyes brightened suddenly and she grinned at Camicazi who simply rolled her eyes unimpressed. The tall boy nodded.

>"This is Gudrun." He said nodding at the larger boy. Alexander gave a courteous nod to him.
"Alexander."

>"We know." Gudrun replied. "Heard quite a bit about you already. After last night, the village is buzzing. It's all they can talk about, well that and Camicazi's contract..." There was a flash of silver and a hatchet grazed past Gudrun's ear making him squeal frightened.
"Camicazi!" The other boy snapped. Camicazi gritted her teeth and forced a smile.

>"I had nothing to do with it."
"Sure you didn't. Only you could throw it that close to his head and not injure him!"

>"Why thank you for the compliment!"
"It's not funny Camicazi!" He growled. She smirked.

>"No it's not." Gudrun agreed. She smirked still more. It was a dangerous smile curling at the corners of her mouth. Alexander felt sure that could only mean trouble.
"I beg to differ. It is really

quite funny."

>"You shouldn't do it Camicazi! It's no way to treat your people!"<p>

"Ah but he's not my people! I am not the chief!"

>"Yes but..."
"And I never will be. That is not my calling. I shall just run the academy and the dragon stalls."

"You still can't go around throwing hatchets at anybody who says the truth!" Gudrun protested. This time an axe buried itself into the stone in front of his right foot. He jumped back yelping.

"CAMICAZI!" The other boy yelled. She just grinned like a wild thing.

>"He had it coming!"<p>

"He did not..."

"He said I had a contract! Said it was the truth!"

"That doesn't warrant throwing weapons at him!"

"I didn't. I threw them near him!"

"And if you'd missed?!"

"I never miss!"

"But if you had you could have done him serious injury!"

>"I love it when he gets angry and chief-y. Putting his foot down and stuff..." Buff said, a weird look on her face. Her brother looked repulsed, as did Camicazi.<p>

"Gross."

"Camicazi you need to apologize!"

"Who the hell do you think you are?!" She shrieked at him. "You can't tell me what to do!"

"I just did, and unless you plan on going to another island, you'd better get used to it!"

"I'm not going to apologise."

"Rude. She picked up too many bad habits from back on Hysteria if you ask me." Gudrun muttered. At this point even the other boy stared at him in shock. For a split second there was silence. Then in a blur of movement, he was on the floor with the curve of an axe pressed against his throat, Camicazi holding it there and pinning him to the ground.

>"Say that again." She hissed, her voice dangerously low.<p>

"You're just kind of proving my point here..." He choked. "You spent too long with Dagur and his ilk. You're more like them than you care to admit." It became apparent that everyone thought this was over the line, for no one moved for a whole minute. Then the taller boy spoke softly.

>"Cami, let him up."
"No."

"Cami..." He placed a hand on her shoulder. "Let him up. You know you're not really going to do anything. You wouldn't..."

>"Wouldn't I?!" She yelled suddenly. She stood up, axe still pressed to his throat and one foot keeping him pinned. "You know I've done it before! Why wouldn't I do it again!"<p>

"Cami just take the axe away from his throat!" He kept his tone even but there was a note of panic in his voice.

"I will not!" She was pressing on the axe slightly, a thin pink line was starting to become visible.

"Cami take it off!"

"NO!"

"TAKE IT OFF!"

"NO!"

>"Cami, let him up." A voice spoke, soft, gentle.
"He said... He said I was..."

"I know what he said, let him up. We both know you aren't like them. Not really. So let him up." She stood there, shaking, her breathing uneven. "Camicazi... let him go." A soft rumble followed the voice, concerned, gentle. Slowly, she moved her foot and then with a shaky sigh, she tugged the axe away from his throat. She stepped back several paces and the alpha, Toothless, curled around her, rumbling softly at her as she collapsed to her knees. Alexander felt an impulsive urge to go over to comfort her, but her father straightened up again, looking from the boy on the floor, to the tall one still standing, to Camicazi huddled on the floor with Toothless. He sighed heavily.

>"This cannot go on. Cami, you know that. You know you cannot act like that just because he makes you mad." He looked tired, maybe even a little saddened, but he didn't look angry. It was baffling.
"She can't get away with it, you know that?"

>"I do know. Camicazi, you're not seeing Sparky tomorrow either. And unless your behaviour is near enough perfect for the rest of the week, there will be no racing." Camicazi didn't move. She looked frightened if anything, staring dead ahead, eyes glazed mouth slightly agape as she rocked softly back and forth. The dragons began making strange sounds and she seemed to slowly relax. He had to wonder what they were saying, how it could have such an effect.
One dragon seemed less than content. Screeching and blasts of lightning hit the doors on a pen. That had to be Sparky's holding pen. He seemed less than happy about what was going on. Could he sense Camicazi's distress? Was their bond that strong?

>"Well that's one unhappy dragon." Eret muttered as he walked away from the pen doors, his hair standing on end.
"I'm not surprised." Hiccup said looking from Eret to Camicazi. "He knows what's going on, and he can't get to her."

>"And you won't...?"
"No, she's being punished. I don't want to cause him distress, but he'll be worse if I let him see her." Sparky seemed to disagree as he sent yet another blast towards the doors and let out a heart-wrenching scream. It was like he was in physical pain. The others all flinched and looked pained by the sound. Camicazi looked up and walked towards the door, humming softly, singing words he could not make out. The crying ceased as her hand

touched the doors.

>"It's ok Sparky... I'm ok. We both are. He can't hurt us anymore. We're safe, we're home. This is where we belong." He knew life hadn't been easy for her in her youth, before Berk, but it made him wonder just HOW bad it had been, how much had she and Sparky depended on each other?<p>

36. Chapter 36

I apologise profusely for my absence as of late. As it turns out, juggling a job, degree and anxiety disorder makes it very hard to write fanfiction. I've even been so ashamed of not having updated I wouldn't use my laptop, check my account or even check my emails, making my boyfriend do it for me.

However, I'm starting to get back some of my mojo and I hope to be updating more regularly than every six months or so :(Though I must warn you, over the next few months I face a very busy period at work as well as a few major assignments. So if things slow up between now and June, please be patient.

Sorry again and thank you for staying with the story. I hope I can stop disappointing people now.

Camicazi was relatively reserved for the remainder of the day. Following the events in the academy she had spoken very little and gone home earlier. Alexander didn't see her again that day.
>Eret allowed him to sleep in his small fabric hut on a slightly raised mattress made of straw. It wasn't as soft as his bed in Rome, but it certainly beat the cold hard stone of the cells.
Eret gave him a pillow and a thick woven blanket for warmth. Snuggled under that, Alexander slept better than he had the previous night. His dreams were still haunted though; again he saw fire, he saw scales, he saw war. It was horrifying. He tossed and turned. He could see Camicazi. But that was where the dream changed.

She did not attack him. Her gaze softened slightly when she looked at him. All around them was war and battle. The roar of dragon and Vikings competing with the bellowing of the roman army. But she smiled at him. He tried to take a step towards her but blood began to dribble from her mouth and she spluttered slightly. He heard the terrible scream of Sparky and he yelled too. She stared at him, eyes glassed over, her mouth moved slightly and then she crumpled dead and Alexander awoke with a yell.

Someone had killed her in his dream. Someone had killed Camicazi. He hadn't seen their face, only the flash of a silver broadsword much like his own Roman one.

So great was his terror that he threw back the thick blanket and placed his feet in the boots before slipping out through the fabric doorway of the hut.

Berk was pitch dark. Alexander felt suddenly more apprehensive about being out in the village alone by night. But he needed to know. And so, tenderly, he walked through the village heart, taking note of things as he went, trying to find his way. He could hear the soft snoring of dragons, the subtle whisper of the wind, the gentle crashing of the sea upon the cliff. Alexander couldn't remember where

the chief's house was.

He stared around the dark but everything looked the same. He could barely see where he was going. His heart began to race. It would not be a good idea to get caught out in the village in the middle of the night. The Vikings were still weary of him. To be found wandering the village would surely see him locked away again. And how exactly would he explain himself? Tell the chief he dreamed someone murdered his daughter and he was so worried he had to sneak to their house to check on her? That would probably see him dead.

He looked around again, now in a slight panic. What if there were dragons patrolling? What if they attacked? He couldn't even work out where he had come from. Which direction was Eret's hut in? How did he get back? He stumbled over something thick on the ground. Oh no. oh no. What if that was the tail of a sleeping dragon? He walked backwards, staring at the unmoving shape and then tripped over again, landing on his backside. This time the thing he had tripped over shifted. The tail slipped away and something stirred out of sight. Alexander scrambled backwards on his backside, frantically trying to get away, desperately trying to remember which way Eret's hut would be.

A dragon emerged from the dark, eyes practically glowing as it stared at him, approaching with a low growl. This was it. This was surely the end.

>"Fanghook! Back!" A voice snapped from behind him. The dragon snarled. "Fanghook." The voice warned and the dragon slunk back to it's sleeping spot, careful to keep it's tail in this time. Alexander turned around and scrambled to his feet to see Camicazi's mother "Astrid" standing before him. She stared at him and narrowed her gaze.
"Thank you" I'm sorry" I didn't mean to" He stuttered feeling foolish. Astrid though, was used to stuttering. There had been a time every sentence Hiccup spoke to her had been stuttered.

>"What are you doing out here, Alexander?" She questioned.
"I had a nightmare" That sounded pathetically childish. "and I, well I couldn't get back to sleep. I was worried. I thought maybe a brief walk would help" but then I couldn't remember where I was and how to get back to Eret. And I tripped over the dragon's tail" Astrid raised her eyebrow and fixed him with an expression frighteningly similar to Camicazi's. "I shouldn't have been out alone. I'm sorry. Can you point me back to Eret's please?" He asked, hanging his head shamefully.

Astrid considered him for a moment. She knew what it was like to suffer from nightmares. For years after they lost Camicazi she had been plagued by them. Hiccup had suffered many nightmares more recently following the death of his father. Camicazi often awoke screaming.

>Only Finn seemed to escape from the bane of nightmares. "You're right, it wasn't wise. But since you're awake, and I'm out here, let's walk."<p>

Alexander felt fairly nervous at this suggestion but he complied anyway. He was almost as frightened of her as he was of her daughter.

"What nightmares plagued you then?" She asked as they walked through the village quietly. Alexander wasn't sure whether to say or not.

Maybe he ought to just leave some details out.

>"War." Astrid nodded slowly, considering his response.
"Have you been in war yourself Alexander?" She asked him. He shook his head by way of response. He'd practised fighting, he'd fought in smaller fights and accompanied his father on a number of occasions, but full war was something he had yet to experience. "Consider yourself lucky. War is worse than you can imagine. However bad it seems in your dreams, the reality is worse." She told him. Alexander didn't doubt that one bit.

>"If you don't mind my asking, what kept you awake?" She paused and looked at him, studying him hard. Alexander wished he hadn't asked at all. She continued walking and for a moment was quiet and then she spoke.
"Much the same as you. The fear that I can't protect the people I love. A fear that war will take them from me." He could understand that. She'd clearly seen enough war in her life, she'd lost enough. He could understand her concern. Especially being a parent who lost her child once. She must constantly worry.

>"You helped my Cami." Astrid said suddenly, catching Alexander off guard. "Why?"<p>

That caught him. Truth be known, he wasn't really sure what made him decide to help. Why he didn't just leave her to her fate. Leave the dragon. What made him act against everything he knew.

>"To be honest, I don't know. There was just something that told me I should. That it was the right thing to do. Something about her surprised me. She was different to anything I knew or expected. She was interesting."
"Hmmm, that's certainly one way to describe her. She seems to think you're interesting too."

>"I'm different I guess. She's not met a roman before."
"Mmm, perhaps." They walked a little further in silence. Alexander wasn't really sure what to say.

>"Her connection with Sparkyâ€¦ It's amazing." He said quietly.
"It is an incredibly strong bond. But it's not surprising really. You can't go through everything they did and not be incredibly closely bonded. We all have a bond with our dragons. They develop and grow as we do. I couldn't imagine life without Stormfly. It's impossible to describe. Our dragons areâ€¦ they're like soulmates. But dragon ones. And somehow it just works." She tried to explain. Alexander couldn't imagine a bond that strong.

>"I hope one day maybe I might understand how that feels." He replied. Astrid looked at him again and then walked on. She didn't speak again, and nor did he, until they stopped outside Eret's.
"I suggest you try for some sleep. And I don't recommend any night time wanderings until you're accustomed to the village and the layout. Goodnight Alexander."

>"Goodnight." He replied and as she walked away, he slipped back into the hut and crawled into his bed to await the dawn.<p>

End
file.